



The St. Nicholas Series

EDITED BY THE REV. DOM BEDE CAMM, O.S.B.

BLESSED JEANNE D'ARC THE MAID OF FRANCE



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The Call of Jeanne d'Arc.

BLESSED
JEANNE D'ARC
THE MAID OF FRANCE

BY
C. M. ANTONY

WITH A PREFACE BY
FATHER ROBERT

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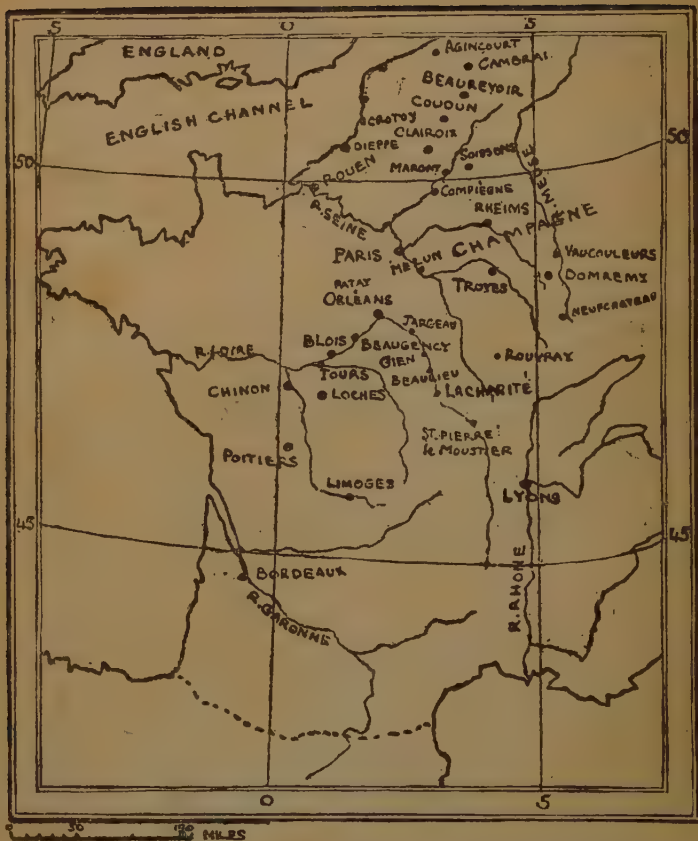
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GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF KINGS OF FRANCE

1364—1461

SHOWING RELATIONSHIP OF RIVAL DUKES OF ORLEANS AND BURGUNDY

JOHN THE GOOD, d. 1364.

CHARLES V, DUKE OF ANJOU. DUKE OF BERRY.

d. 1380.

PHILIP THE BOLD, Duke of Burgundy, d. 1404.

CHARLES VI=
Isabelle of Ba-
varia, d. 1422.

CHARLES VII,
d. 1461.

LOUIS. DUKE OF ORLEANS,
murdered by John the Fear-
less, Duke of Burgundy,
his first cousin, 1407.

CHARLES, DUKE OF OR-
LEANS, taken prisoner at
Agincourt, 1415, released,
1440.

JOHN THE FEARLESS, Duke
of Burgundy. Murders D.
of Orleans, 1407. Is mur-
dered by Dauphin (after-
wards Charles VII, 1419.

PHILIP THE GOOD, who, to
aveng^t his father's murder,
offered the Crown of France
to the King of England,
1420, d. 1467.

PREFATORY NOTE

THE author wishes to acknowledge very gratefully the courtesy of Mr. W. Heine-mann in allowing her to quote from Mr. T. Douglas Murray's valuable work, "Jeanne d'Arc," from which the greater part of the translations of original documents in this book are taken. The numbers in the foot-notes refer, unless otherwise stated, to the corresponding pages in "Jeanne d'Arc."

She also wishes to thank the Very Rev. Father Francis Wyndham, O.S.C., who most kindly read the book in proof, and made some valuable suggestions and corrections; the Very Rev. Dom Bede Camm, O.S.B., the Rev. J. Arendzen, D.D., the Rev. A. Costédoat, S.C.J., and several other priests, for help and information.

Above all, her thanks are due to Father Robert Hugh Benson, to whom the book owes its existence, and the writer—everything.

C. M. ANTONY.

*Saffron-Walden,
Christmas Eve, 1907.*

PREFACE

THERE is hardly any tragedy in history so complete, from what is called the common-sense point of view, as that of Jeanne d'Arc. She was modest and retiring, yet she was forced to lead armies to battle in the dress of a man; she was an ardent and saintly Christian, yet she was cast out from the Church that she loved, as a heretic, a blasphemer, and an "invoker of devils"; she was a sensitive girl, yet she suffered wounds, she was imprisoned with extreme rigour, and died by fire; she gave up her effective life for a worthless man; she was transparently sincere, yet she was so worked upon by abuse and charges of bad faith, that she was tempted to doubt her own word and the evidence of her senses; she accomplished everything to which God called her, yet she was universally denounced as a failure and a braggart; finally, she was sold by her

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friends into the hands of her enemies, among whom were certain "chief priests"; in the midst of her torments it seemed that God had forsaken her; and at the close of them she cried out that she had found peace.

It is indeed extraordinary how, in these elements of what the world calls tragedy, her life seems to correspond with the Supreme Model set once for all—that model which from the one side is always called failure, and, on the other, as Christians know, is the victory that overcomes the world. Yet even poor France to-day, blind to her divine mission, yet needing now more than ever one like her though in another plane, acknowledges her amazing courage and the value of her achievements: while the Catholic Church as a whole, that so soon set about her rehabilitation, is approaching now the task of declaring her worthy of the highest honour both in this world and the next.

Men in these days are almost ridiculously afraid of the Supernatural. This terror is, without doubt, the lineal descendant of that same fear which, in Jeanne's days, attributed her working (as also her Divine Master's a

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few centuries before) to the arts of the devil. It was then the devil; now it is the physical world which, in men's opinion, must always be the explanation of the unusual. Such people will honour Jeanne as a brave woman, and will gently laugh at her as a visionary. But the Catholic Christian, remembering what "signs shall follow them that believe," will not, it is to be hoped, find the same *a priori* reasons against the possibility that a girl who, by insight and courage and remarkable sanity, could reverse the tide of history, should also be capable of deciding whether or no the sights that she saw and the sounds that she heard were merely the sunlight and the wind in the apple-blossoms, or actually, as she believed them to be, the saints of heaven. The devil and the world do not, in spite of the cynics, divide the universe between them. There is also God Almighty. . . . It would surely be more of a marvel that a child's hysterics should raise the siege of Orleans, roll back the armies of England, crown the French king, and inspire courage in the face of a frightful death, than that the saints and warriors of God should

JEANNE D'ARC

do these things. Yet there is no third alternative.

Of the action of Catholic priests and bishops it is more difficult for a Catholic to write. There seems really nothing to console us for Cauchon, who, as a brilliant writer says, tried to "make an accomplice of the Almighty," except the reflection that a man called Judas Iscariot was among the Apostles. And it is hard for an Englishman to read of what Englishmen said and did to Jeanne. After all, in considering the whole lamentable story, we are forced, in this as in all else, to take refuge on the Rock of Peter, to which she also appealed. Martin V heard nothing of her story until too late; Calixtus III cleared her name of slander; Pius X has announced her virtues to be heroic, and, it seems probable, will presently raise her to the altars of the Church. These facts, besides those of Jeanne's own making, are perhaps the only stars in the darkness. It was no more the Catholic Church, properly speaking, that consented to Jeanne's burning, than it was the Apostolic College that crucified Christ. It was rather, in both cases, that

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same " World " which to-day is persecuting Jeanne's spiritual brothers and sisters in her own country.

For the details of this story this admirably written and vivid book will be fully sufficient.

ROBERT HUGH BENSON.

JEANNE D'ARC

"THE MAID OF FRANCE"

INTRODUCTION

A GREAT apple-tree, heavy with scented masses of delicate pink and white blossom; the petals falling on the head of a dark-eyed girl of thirteen, in russet serge and crisp linen coif, kneeling with clasped hands on the ground beneath it; while from the little village church close by, half hidden in trees, comes the clear call of the noontide Angelus. A narrow path to the cottage door, set in clumps of old-fashioned flowers and bushes of fragrant sweet herbs, behind which the garden slopes down to the shallow, rapid brook; above, the deep blue of a cloudless sky, where the sun is shining in its strength; and on the pathway before the kneeling child a dazzling radiance of white light which shames and darkens even

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the summer sunshine; and a magnificent mailed figure, St. Michael the Archangel himself, with a glittering company of his fellows, flashing like fire into the world of sight and sense. And then a clear, low voice, speaking words of encouragement.

What does the picture mean? Why was the great Archangel sent to little Jeanne d'Arc in her humble cottage home in an obscure French village? Jeanne herself did not understand when first she saw the glorious apparition; it was not until St. Michael had appeared many times, and she had often listened to the voice which spoke, that she learnt that God, Who sometimes chooses the clumsiest and weakest tools to do His most delicate and lasting work, had chosen her, the little peasant girl, to carry out one of the most wonderful missions in history—to save her country, and to crown her King.

In the year of grace 1425 the Hundred Years' War between France and England was drawing to a close. During the last three troubled reigns two great parties had arisen in France, which was hopelessly divided by a cruel civil war. The smaller,

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called Orleanist or Royalist, was the party of the French King; while about three-quarters of France belonged to the Burgundian faction, which was in close alliance with England, and which acknowledged Henry VI of England as King of France.

Charles VII, the Dauphin of France, was king only in name. He had never been crowned, though he had succeeded to the throne in 1422, two years after the infamous Treaty of Troyes, by which France had been handed over to England by Philip of Burgundy and the Queen-Mother Isabelle. The Duke of Bedford, Regent of Henry VI, had far more power in France than its lawful King. Only one large town remained to Charles—Orleans, on the Loire.

From the first the Dauphin seems to have believed his position hopeless: "He seemed determined if he could not keep his kingdom that he would at least lose it gaily." He allowed the months to slip by without striking a blow, while the English and Burgundians were gaining ground, and did his best to forget his troubles and the misery of his unhappy kingdom in sports and

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amusements at the Court which he held in one or other of the castles on the Loire. He was weak, vacillating, incapable of forming an independent judgement, dominated by bad advisers, pitiably unable to appreciate heroism or to recognize genius. Yet it was to him that Jeanne was sent; though, as we shall see, her mission was not revealed to her at once, but little by little, almost day by day. Not until the end did she understand that her way of sorrows was to find its close in a martyr's death.

It is perhaps going too far to say that no one believed in Jeanne. Many of her comrades in arms did so implicitly. "She seemed to me," says the grandson of Bertrand du Guesclin, "as a holy Angel of God." But, as an authority¹ has pointed out, even in their case, belief scarcely survived defeat. At the outset, however, scarcely any one took her seriously, and this must have caused her the keenest pain. When she first came to the King not half-a-dozen people believed in her, and the King himself, who owed her his crown, never seems

¹ M. Petit de Julleville.

INTRODUCTION

to have been thoroughly convinced of her Divine mission. The courtiers laughed at her. Her enemies at first laughed too; then, growing angry, hated and reviled her; then, terrified, called her a witch. The very captains who fought for her grew jealous of her, and refused to take their orders from a slip of a girl. Still she persevered! ¹“With all my power I accomplish the command that our Lord sends me through my voices, so far as I understand them. They command nothing but the good pleasure of our Lord.” If even her friends wondered sometimes if her greatest feats were the result of witchcraft, we can scarcely blame her enemies for openly declaring and believing that she was a ²“lyme of the fiend.”

Twenty-four years after her martyrdom Pope Calixtus III granted to the mother and brothers of the Maid a Rescript, authorizing the revision of the previous trial, and the calling of witnesses who should speak as to Jeanne's stainless life, and the manner of her heroic death—for at Rouen no witnesses had been called. Previous attempts to do

¹ P. 83. ² Lingard. *Letter of the Duke of Bedford*.

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this had failed, for fear of the English. On November 7th, 1455, the Archbishop of Rheims, two other bishops, and the Inquisitor for France, met in the Church of Notre Dame at Paris, and an old woman, weeping, was led in, who threw herself on her knees, with her sons, before the Archbishop, holding out the precious Brief, and imploring, with tears and groans,¹ that justice should be done, and that the stain of heresy which lay upon the name of her daughter, Jeanne d'Arc, and her family should be removed. It was an intensely moving scene, in which the whole audience joined, kneeling and weeping. The process of the "Rehabilitation," as it is called, lasted about six months. One hundred and seventy witnesses in all were heard at Paris, Domremy, Orleans, Vaucouleurs, Rouen, and even at distant Lyons. No pains were spared to discover the truth. And in the end, after many sittings and long deliberations of the judges, on July 7th, 1456, the Archbishop of Rheims read aloud in Rouen Cathedral the formal sentence of Rehabilitation, by which the sentence at the first trial

¹ "Gémissements."

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was declared utterly null and void, and Jeanne absolutely innocent of all that was alleged against her: "because truth had been suppressed, and falsehood substituted in certain essential points," by the cruel judges who had taken part in the schismatic Council of Bâle. A solemn procession was enjoined, and the next day a great sermon was preached, and a cross planted on the very spot on which the Maid of France had been done to death. Thus the Holy Father, in virtue of his supreme authority, wiped out the unjust sentence of a cruel, bigoted local tribunal, entirely under the control of an unscrupulous and violent political partisan.

But this was not enough. Year by year—as centuries rolled on, and the public fête was celebrated at Orleans to do honour to the Maid on the anniversary of the deliverance of the town—and not only there, but in many other cities and villages of France—the feeling grew and increased throughout the Catholic Church in that country that it was not merely an heroic girl with a supernatural mission to whom they were doing honour, but one whom they might hope in the future to see raised to the altars and in-

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voked as a saint. In 1869 the Bishop of Orleans, in the name of many archbishops and bishops of France, including the Archbishop of Rouen, petitioned the Holy See for the introduction of the cause of Jeanne d'Arc, and Pope Pius IX consented to the holding of the preliminary inquiry. This lasted from 1874 to 1888, and was held at Orleans. The result was laid before the Sacred Congregation of Rites at Rome on January 27th, 1894, when, the vote being favourable, Pope Leo XIII signed on the same day the Decree of the Introduction of the Beatification and Canonisation of Jeanne d'Arc.

On January 5th, 1904—the eve of her birthday—Pope Pius X issued a Decree declaring that Jeanne d'Arc had practised *the theological and cardinal virtues in the heroic degree*.

Nothing since then has been made public, but it is probable that during the present year, 1908, a further stage will be reached, and that we may soon be able to invoke her as *Blessed Jeanne d'Arc*.

“Blessed are they that suffer persecution . . . for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.”

PART I

DOMREMY TO CHINON

JANUARY 6TH, 1412—APRIL 15TH, 1429

I

DOMREMY

JEANNE D'ARC was born on the Feast of the Epiphany, 1412. Her parents, Jacques and Isabelle d'Arc, lived at Domremy, a little village of Champagne. She was therefore a born subject of the King of France, and not, as some of her biographers tell us, a native of Lorraine, from which territory of the Empire Champagne was divided by the River Meuse. Domremy and the neighbouring village, Greux, are on the left bank of the river, and were separated by a brook which flowed into it, past the very door of the cottage which was Jeanne's old home. The inhabitants of the two villages, though close to Burgundian

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territory and surrounded by enemies, were intensely loyal; there was only one Burgundian, Jeanne tells us herself, in Domremy.

Her father was a typical French peasant of the well-to-do class, farming a little land, and influential among his neighbours. He seems to have been a dark, stern, severe man, inclined to be gloomy and morose, and his children were evidently greatly in awe of him. His wife, a gentle, pious woman, loved her children tenderly, and brought them up with the greatest care. Little Jeannette and her sister Cathérine, though they could neither read nor write, learnt to spin and sew beautifully, and to do all kinds of housework. They learnt, too, to say their prayers, the Creed, the Our Father, and the Hail Mary; and this was all that their mother could teach them. They had three brothers, Jacques, Jean, and Pierre, the two younger of whom followed Jeanne and her fortunes later on, and the whole family lived the quiet frugal life of the ordinary hard-working French peasant; there was nothing to mark them out in any

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way from any other family in Domremy, or, indeed, in France.

An old writer tells us that on the night of her birth all the inhabitants of Domremy were seized with sudden, inexpressible joy. They wondered greatly, questioning each other as to its cause. "Whence comes this great gladness of heart?"¹ They remembered, he says, the great Feast of the Epiphany, and concluded that it was a purely supernatural joy. "But they understood later," for "it was the Epiphany . . . that is to say, the manifestation . . . of the future deliverer of France."

Jeanne's early years are painted for us in tears and tender memories by her old friends and playmates at her Rehabilitation, when every man and woman who had known and loved her fifty years before pressed forward to tell all they knew about the quiet little girl whom they remembered so well, and whose later deeds had set all Christendom ringing. The simple evidence is like a series of delicate water-colour sketches: the apple-orchard, with its rosy, fragrant snow; the

¹ "Allégresse."

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chimney-corner and the clack of the spinning-wheel; the ploughed field in the clear chill of the early spring evening, with its long straight furrows, and a couple of children, boy and girl, leading home the weary, steaming horses; the "Fairies' Tree," with its groups of merry-makers; the lovely Oak Wood, misty with pale bluebells, which the village children wove into garlands to offer to Our Lady at the little hermitage on the hill; the village church in the dusk, with its twinkling lamp, and scattered figures kneeling near the confessional as the Angelus rings out; the tiny room under the sloping roof where two little girls talked late into the summer night; all have the same central figure, a gentle, reserved girl, who knew how to pray and work, as well as how to play; who was loved for her unselfishness by the whole village, from the old curé who heard her first confession, and instructed her so well in the Faith that she was able to answer and put to shame the prelates and doctors in that mock-trial for her life; down to her small playfellow Hauviette, and the little sick boy she tended when he was ill,

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as he witnessed half a century later. We see her from babyhood to girlhood, always modest, truthful, charitable, her greatest joy, to assist at daily Mass; her greatest fault, that she was "too pious." Yet she was a thoroughly healthy child both in mind and body, as fond of play as the other children, and so humble that nothing vexed her so much as being called "pious," or teased about her regularity in saying her prayers, and going to Mass and confession.

And as it is impossible to improve upon their words, Jeanne and her friends shall be allowed to tell the story of those early days themselves, for, as a well-known writer¹ says: "Jeanne d'Arc still remains the best historian of Jeanne d'Arc." She had eight godfathers and godmothers, most of whom bore the name of Jean or Jeanne. One of these, Beatrix d'Estellen, says: ²"I do not think there was anyone better than she in our two villages"; and an old playmate, a boy, tells us: "Often when we were all at play Jeanne would retire alone to talk with God. I and the others laughed at her for

¹ M. Petit de Julleville.

² P. 216

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this. When she heard the bells ring she fell upon her knees." Her neighbour, and special friend, Mengette, says the same thing, adding: "She was a good Christian, of good manners and well brought up." The two children often spun and worked together; outwardly there was no difference between them. Yet one became a simple labourer's wife, while the other was to change the course of history, alter the career of the Kings of France and England, and die a martyr!

Jeanne's piety, however, was not confined to saying her prayers. Many times she gave up her own bed and slept on the hearth that some poor wanderer might have a night's rest: ¹ "She was hospitable," says her old friend Isabellette, who tells us about Jeanne's giving up her bed; and she adds a telling detail: "Jeanne was never seen idling on the roads, but was found in church, at prayer." An old man relates how, when he was a little boy, Jeanne nursed him when he was sick, and tells us, confidentially, "she was very charitable"; adding that

¹ P. 221.

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she loved to kneel down at the sound of the bells. The old clerk and bell-ringer tells us more than this. When he rang the bells unpunctually, or, as occasionally happened, forgot to ring them altogether, Jeanne would give him little presents to be more careful, promising him wool from her sheep, or flat cakes, called "lunes," of her own baking. She seems to have had an extraordinary devotion to the sound of bells all her life.

¹ "She confessed often," continues the bell-ringer; "I can attest what I say, for I was then attached to the church of Domremy, and I often saw Jeanne at Mass, and at the other offices." Jeanne herself tells us:

² "When I was at home with my father I occupied myself with the ordinary cares of the house. I learnt to spin and sew; in sewing and spinning I fear no woman. . . . I did not go to the fields with the sheep and the other animals. ³ When I was bigger, and come to years of discretion, I did not look after [the animals] generally, but I helped to take them to the meadows, and to a castle called the Island, for fear of the

¹ P. 218.

² P. 9.

³ P. 19.

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soldiers. . . . Every year I confessed myself to my own curé, and when he was prevented, to another priest with his permission."

Behind her father's house lay a great oak-wood, the "Bois-chesnu," and here the village children loved to play. All kinds of weird stories were connected with this wood, which was said to be full of fairies.

Considering that the belief in fairies has by no means died out of England in the twentieth century,¹ the only thing that need surprise us is that in that remote corner of France, five hundred years ago, every one did not believe in them. Yet Jeanne at least did not, nor did most of her friends. In vain at her trial her judges tried to prove that her "mission" had been given to her by evil spirits, or fairies, in this very wood, under a great beech tree, about which much evidence was collected.

"When I came before the King," says Jeanne, "several people asked me if there

¹ To quote a single instance, the Quantock Hills are still "pixy-haunted," and the country people point to the green "Fairy-Rings."

DOMREMY

were not in my country a wood, called the Oak Wood, because there were prophecies which said that from the neighbourhood of this wood would come a maid who should do marvellous things. I put no faith in that," she concludes quaintly. Evidently the fairies had been exorcised, for Jean Morel, a labourer of Greux, tells us with charming simplicity: ¹ "Since the Gospel of St. John has been read under the tree they come there no more." The same witness, one of Jeanne's godfathers, gives us a delightful account of her childhood, and incidentally of the beautiful old custom of the village on "Laetare" Sunday; no doubt one of those ancient pagan survivals which the Church has assimilated and made her own. "She was so good that all the village of Domremy loved her. . . . She had modest ways, as be seemed one whose parents were not rich. . . . When she heard the Mass-bell, if she were in the fields, she would go back to the village and to the Church, in order to hear Mass." He tells how she went frequently to confession, and continues: "On the subject of the

¹ P. 214.

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Fairies' Tree, I have heard that the Fairies came there long ago to dance." . . . At the present day, on the Sunday¹ when in the Holy Church of God the Introit to the Mass "Laetare Jerusalem" is sung, called with us "the Sunday of the Wells," the young maidens and youths of Domremy are accustomed to go there, and also in the spring and summer and on festival days; they dance there and have a feast."

It was largely upon these simple village games that her judges tried to build up their charge of witchcraft and consultation with evil spirits. But the significant fact that Jeanne never went to the Fairies' Tree alone is recorded by more than one witness.

The shadow of the terrible war lay heavy upon the land, even upon distant Domremy, on the very borders of neutral territory. Once, before she was twelve years old, Jeanne's family and the other villagers had to flee eight miles to the town of Neufchâteau, in Lorraine, to escape the Burgundian raid-

¹ The Fourth Sunday in Lent, still observed in some rural districts of England as "Mothering-Sunday."

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ers, who burnt the village and the church, and carried off everything they could lay their hands on. Jeanne tells us, in her passionate loyalty (although she was the god-mother of his first-born son), that she would have been willing that the one Burgundian in Domremy should have had his head cut off, "always had it pleased God"! At her trial her enemies took advantage of this journey to pretend that she got into bad company at Neufchâteau, and became a servant at a very disreputable inn. This was utterly untrue. Many witnesses affirm that Jeanne never left her father and mother for a single day, and Jeanne says so herself. She adds: ¹ "two or three times I confessed myself to the mendicant friars . . . at Neufchâteau . . . where I sojourned about fifteen days."

So the little girl grew up, always under the shadow of the dark war-cloud, strong and tall, having all the signs of "a perfect Christian and true Catholic" as her parish priest bore witness. "Pious, well brought-up and Godfearing," says the aged curé of a

¹ P. 10.

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neighbouring parish,¹ “without her like in the whole village. Often did she confess her sins; and, if she had had money, she would have given it to [her parish priest], he told me, to say Masses. Every day when he celebrated Mass, she was there.” A threefold flame burnt in her young soul, love of our Lord, of His Blessed Mother, and of her country. ² “Always I had a great will and desire that my King should have his own Kingdom.”

When she was thirteen that happened which changed the course of her whole life, the life which should change the destiny of France. ³ “I was thirteen when I had a voice from God for my help and guidance. The first time that I heard this voice I was very much frightened. It was mid-day, in the summer, in my father’s garden.” The little girl in her peasant’s dress, going about her household tasks, was crossing the cottage garden, thick with old-fashioned flowers, sloping towards the brook which tinkled below over its shallow, pebbly bed. Sud-

¹ Messire Etienne of Sionne (p. 216).

² P. 19.

³ P. 10.

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denly a great light shone before her, brighter than the noon-day sun, and she heard a voice. ¹“It seemed to me,” she says simply, “to come from lips I should reverence.” As she raised her eyes there stood before her a radiant vision. “You ask me under what form this voice appeared to me. ²It was St. Michael. I saw him before my eyes. He was not alone, but quite surrounded by the Angels of Heaven . . . I saw them with my bodily eyes as well as I see you; when they went from me I wept; I should have liked to be taken away with them. ³St. Michael came to me in the form of a true honest man . . . I believe the deeds and words of St. Michael who appeared to me as firmly as I believe our Saviour Jesus Christ suffered Death and Passion for us. And that which makes me believe it is the good counsel, encouragement, and good doctrine which he has given me. [I knew St. Michael] by the speech and language of the Angels. I believe firmly that they were Angels. I believed it at once, and I had the will to believe it. When St. Michael came to me he said to me:

¹ P. 10.

² P. 25.

³ Pp. 84-5.

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‘St. Catherine and St. Margaret will come to thee, follow their counsel; they have been chosen to guide and counsel thee in all thou hast to do; believe what they shall tell thee, it is the order of Our Lord.’ . . . The first time I was in great doubt if it were St. Michael, and I was much afraid; afterwards he had taught me so well, and it was so clear to me that I believed firmly it was he. Above all things he told me to be a good child and that God would help me—to come to the help of the King of France among other things.”

In these words of Jeanne's the story of the next three years is enfolded. At first St. Michael only told her to “be a good child and go to church.” But as her natural fear lessened the Archangel gradually disclosed his true mission to the little peasant-girl; and when she understood what God really required of her, and that the time would come when she must leave her home to follow the mysterious vocation which she then only comprehended dimly, with the whole strength of her passionate nature she embraced the revealed Will of God—and waited.

II

VAUCOULEURS

WHEN St. Michael first appeared to Jeanne he spoke no word of her mission. She tells us this herself. Nor did she ever say when that mission was definitely revealed to her. But as her three years of preparation went on, all her doubts—if she ever had any—left her, and her difficulties were cleared up. She seems to have made, at the outset, after her first trembling appeals to the Archangel—"I am only a poor girl who knows nothing of riding or fighting"—an heroic act of confidence in God, on which, as on the crest of a mighty wave, she was borne irresistibly to her goal. She had "the will to believe," as she tells us.

As time went on her Voices left her in no doubt as to her mission. St. Michael explained it to her clearly. She was to save France, to deliver Orleans, to crown the

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Dauphin. The supernatural character of her vocation was so clearly impressed upon her soul that she ceased to urge her own unworthiness. Such a mission as that had hitherto been beyond the power of the wisest statesman or the bravest soldier in the land. Now that God Himself had taken in hand the cause of France He could, if he willed, work His own ends by means of a little peasant girl as well as by St. Michael himself! Those three years might almost be called a Long Retreat, which Jeanne made with the angels, and her two martyr-saints, St. Catherine and St. Margaret. She spoke with them constantly, probably daily; and as time went on, and the trouble of her mind was quieted, and her soul grew calm and strong, their instructions grew more and more definite and precise. A part at least of the great things she was to suffer for the love of God and her country was revealed to her. Her own intense humility gave her courage to accept the revelation. She was simple enough and strong enough to do exactly as she was told, because she knew herself to be nothing and God to be everything!

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We must not imagine, however, that Jeanne passed those three years in a kind of ecstatic dream! Although she never knew, from hour to hour, when she should see the great halo of light, and the splendid vision of St. Michael stand radiant before her; or the shining figures of her martyr-saints with their crowned heads greet her as she went out in the early morning to milk the cow, or at noon to the hayfield, or sat under the rosy foam of the apple-blossom sewing her fine linen seams, she did her work just as usual. No one at home even guessed that anything had happened to Jeanne. It gives us great insight into the simple strength of her character when we know that she never spoke, even to her mother, of the supernatural side of her life. No one guessed that the dark-haired, quiet little girl, in her peasant's dress of rough russet serge, who scrubbed the floor, and baked the bread, and played under the Fairies' Tree; who sat on a wooden stool by the fireside on winter evenings, spinning silently, or trying her dark eyes over the delicate stitchery she put into her mother's kerchiefs, or her own

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coifs and aprons by the dancing light of the pine-logs,—no one guessed that Jeanne had been talking perhaps only an hour ago to the Archangel St. Michael himself; or that the gentle voice (of which we hear so much, later) answering her mother's questions, had that very day been speaking to St. Catherine and St. Margaret.

It is almost certain that had they known not one would have believed. Few of those who have been Divinely commissioned to a great work have had to suffer so keenly from ridicule and unbelief as Jeanne d'Arc, and no one believed in her less than her own family, at first. Indeed, she explained her silence afterwards by saying that she was afraid of being stopped if she spoke of her mission, especially by her father. It is probable that she was instructed by her Voices not to mention the subject in confession, most likely because the old curé of the parish would not have understood, either; and would have forbidden the child to indulge her imagination in idle dreaming. That she never did so is a fact which her judges pressed against her very strongly at

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her trial; but it is explained by this theory of obedience.

It was during the course of the third year, 1427-8, that Jeanne learnt in minute detail exactly what steps she had to take to begin her mission. Orleans on the Loire, the most important town left to the Dauphin, and the stronghold of the Orleanist party, was being besieged by the Duke of Bedford. Jeanne had no peace now. '“[The Voice] said to me, two or three times a week: ‘You must go into France.’ My father knew nothing of my going. The Voice said to me: ‘Go into France.’ I could stay no longer. It said to me: ‘Go, raise the siege which is being made before the city of Orleans. Go!’ it added, ‘to Robert de Baudricourt, Captain of Vaucouleurs: he will furnish you with an escort to accompany you.’ And I replied that I was but a poor girl who knew nothing of riding or fighting.”

A few leagues from Domremy was a small town called Vaucouleurs, held for the Dauphin by Robert de Baudricourt, a good soldier but a bad Catholic; not at all the sort

¹ P. 10.

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of man who would be likely to accept Jeanne and her mission on her own representation. To him, however, she was bidden to go.

In those days even more than in these, the unwritten rules which governed a French peasant girl at home in her father's house were very severe. To go away to Vaucouleurs, even escorted by one of her brothers, would have been an extraordinary and unheard-of thing,—but to go to the Captain in command and declare to him that she was sent by God to save France,—no wonder Jeanne was silent! Durand Laxart, her uncle by marriage, a labourer living at Burey, close to Vaucouleurs, came quite unconsciously to the rescue. He came over one day to see his relations, and Jeanne, doubtless counselled by her Voices, besought the good simple man to take her back with him on a visit to her aunt; and after this had been arranged, with some difficulty, she broke the great news to him as they trudged side by side along the dusty road. ¹“She told me,” he says, “that she wished to go to France, to the Dauphin, to have him

¹ P. 226.

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crowned. 'Was it not foretold formerly,' she said to me, 'that France should be desolated by a woman,¹ and should be restored by a maid?'" One can easily imagine his state of mind as her earnest words poured into his slow brain, which was at first unable to take in this extraordinary revelation. But gradually his niece's intense simplicity, her detailed description of the Heavenly Visitors who had charged her with her mission, and her own inflexible determination to carry it out, won upon Laxart. He promised to take her to Vaucouleurs, and if possible to obtain an interview with Robert de Baudricourt. It was Ascension Day, 1428.

The details of the first interview are confused and obscure. It seems probable that Laxart himself went to see de Baudricourt first while Jeanne waited without. The Captain of Vaucouleurs, who had a quick temper and a coarse tongue, told Durand, laughing heartily, to take her back to her mother and give her a good whipping. ² "Many times,"

¹ Isabelle of Bavaria, the wicked Queen of Charles VI and mother of the Dauphin, who had betrayed her country by signing the Treaty of Troyes.

² P. 226.

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says the poor man, "Robert told me to take her back . . . and box her ears." However, at last he prevailed upon de Baudricourt to see his niece. The Captain spoke to her brusquely and roughly when she was brought before him, but Jeanne did not flinch. An account of the interview is given us by Bertrand de Poulengey, a young nobleman who was present when Laxart explained to de Baudricourt, amidst the general merriment, that a little peasant-girl had come from Domremy to save the King of France. ¹ "I saw her," he says, "speaking to the Captain, Robert de Baudricourt. She told him that she came in the name of her Lord; that the Dauphin must be compelled to persevere, and to give battle to his enemies; that the Lord would give him succour before the middle of Lent; that the kingdom belonged not to him, the Dauphin, but to her Lord; that her Lord would have the Dauphin King and hold the kingdom in trust; that she would make him King in spite of his enemies, and would conduct him to his coronation. 'But who is this Lord of

¹ Pp. 228-9.

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whom you speak?' asked Robert of her. 'The King of Heaven,' she replied."

In spite of Jeanne's outspoken fearlessness she made no impression on de Baudricourt. She was laughed at, and sent back disappointed to Domremy in charge of her uncle.

Disappointed, but not discouraged. Never for one single instant did her belief in her mission fail. The three years had not been spent in vain. She went home, and though we are not told whether she spoke of what happened at Vaucouleurs it is probable that some version of it came to her father's ears, for some months after her return he dreamt he had seen Jeanne riding away with men-at-arms. This, to a narrow-minded, ignorant peasant, gloomy and morose as we know Jacques d'Arc to have been, meant ruin and hopeless disgrace; the mere thought of his child in the company of rough soldiers was torture to him. He had watched his daughter narrowly since Durand had brought her back, for his suspicions were roused; the dream made him frantic. Jeanne says:
¹ "When I was still with my father and

¹ P. 64.

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mother my mother told me many times that my father had spoken of having dreams that I, Jeanne, his daughter, went away with the men-at-arms. . . . I have heard my mother say that my father told my brothers: 'Truly if I thought this thing would happen that I have dreamt about my daughter I could wish you to drown her, and if you would not do it I could drown her myself.' He nearly lost his senses when I went to Vaucouleurs."¹

It was the attitude of a typical French peasant, and need not surprise us, but it helps us to understand Jeanne's three years' silence! She knew her father well.

It must have been a sad and anxious household as the autumn days of 1428 shortened into winter, and rumours of the horrors of the siege of Orleans were in all men's mouths. The Voices grew ever more and more insistent. Jeanne could resist them no longer. She knew it was worse than useless to distress her parents by telling them of her intended departure. Nothing short of a miracle could have altered her father's opinions on the subject; and, as we know,

¹ The second time.



The Vigil of Jeanne d'Arc.

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she feared lest she should be stopped. When Durand Laxart, whose wife was ill, came to Domremy just after Christmas, 1428, to ask Jeanne to come to Burey and help to nurse her aunt, she gladly snatched the opportunity; and made the heroic sacrifice of going away in silence, not even saying good-bye to those at home, lest she should be questioned and detained. It is another light upon the wonderful strength of her character. She says, ¹ "In all things I obeyed [my parents] well, except in that of the journey; but afterwards I wrote to them and they forgave me. If God commanded, it was right to obey. If God commanded it, had I a hundred fathers and mothers, and had I been a King's daughter, I should have gone. As to my father and mother, my Voices would have been quite willing I should tell them had it not been for the trouble I should have caused them in speaking of this. As for myself, I would not have told them at any price. My Voices agreed that I might either speak to my father and mother or be silent."

¹ P. 63.

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She went away quietly one winter's morning very early; her father's consent having been reluctantly given to her going to nurse her aunt; meeting, as she left Domremy and all her little world behind her for the last time, her old playmate Mengette, who lived in the next cottage. She stopped to speak to her, and told her she was going "to France." No one else seems to have seen her, and it is uncertain whether she was accompanied by Durand Laxart on this second journey. He had taken a simple lodging for her in Vaucouleurs with some kindly labouring people named Leroyer; and thither he brought her, probably from his own house. Cathérine Leroyer, her hostess, tells us: ¹ "I had occasion to know her well; she was an excellent girl, simple, gentle, respectful, well-conducted, loving to go to church. She lived with us at Vaucouleurs at different times about three weeks. . . . One day I saw Robert de Baudricourt . . . and Messire Jean Fournier, our curé, come into our house to visit her. After that they were gone she told me that the priest

¹ P. 227.

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had his stole, and that, in presence of the said captain, he adjured her, saying: 'If you are an evil spirit, avaunt! If you are a good spirit, approach!' Then Jeanne drew near the priest and threw herself at his knees: she said he was wrong to act so, for he had heard her in confession."

This must have been a peculiarly trying time for Jeanne. She had cut herself off from home; she was alone, in a strange place, a girl of seventeen, who, as she tells us, had always been "kept safe with great care" by her parents; and, hardest of all, no one believed in her or her mission. Her refuge was in prayer. She passed whole days in the little church, beseeching our Lord with bitter tears that He would soften the heart of de Baudricourt, without whose help she could do nothing. She probably saw him more than once during this time, and though he still laughed at her, he was evidently becoming affected by her perseverance, and the general opinion of her personal holiness which was rapidly gaining ground. Two things show this very clearly; his visit to Jeanne with the priest, already described;

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and another visit, paid to her a few days later by one of his retinue, a young knight named Jean Nouillonpont or de Metz, who went to see her in the Leroyer's house, partly from curiosity, and partly, no doubt, to carry back to de Baudricourt his own report of the marvellous Maid. His account is as follows: ¹“When Jeannette was at Vaucouleurs, I saw her dressed in a red dress, poor and worn. She lived at the house of one named Henri Leroyer. ‘What are you doing here, my friend?’ I said to her, ‘must the King be driven from the kingdom; and are we to be English?’ ‘I am come here,’ she answered me, ‘to this royal town, to speak to Robert de Baudricourt, to the end that he may conduct me, or have me conducted, to the King: but Robert cares neither for me nor for my words. Nevertheless, before the middle of Lent I must be with the King—even if I have to wear down my feet to the knees! No one in the world—neither kings, nor dukes, nor the daughter of the King of

¹ P. 223.

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Scotland,¹ nor any others—can recover the kingdom of France; there is no succour to be expected save from me; but, nevertheless, I would rather spin with my poor mother—for this is not my proper estate: it is, however, necessary that I should go, and do this, because my Lord wills that I should do it.’ And when I asked her who this Lord was, she told me it was God. Then I pledged my faith to her, touching her hand, and promised that, with God’s guidance, I would conduct her to the King. I asked her when she wished to start. ‘Sooner at once than to-morrow, and sooner to-morrow than later,’ she said.” It was this knight, with Bertrand de Poulengey, who first suggested, and prevailed upon Jeanne to adopt, the dress of a man for her journey. He gave her the dress and equipment of one of his own servants.

De Baudricourt’s conduct can be explained to a great extent when we remember the fear of witchcraft then so extraordinarily strong in men’s minds. Many impostors

¹ Margaret, daughter of James I of Scotland, who was betrothed to Louis, afterwards Louis XI, son of the Dauphin.

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claimed to possess supernatural powers, and he was certainly justified in taking every precaution. But when, on February 17th, Jeanne told him that the Dauphin had just suffered another great defeat, and in the course of the week he received the news of the rout of the French army at the Battle of Herrings (February 12th, 1429), his opposition appears finally to have been overcome. Whether he believed in Jeanne or not he seems to have thought that nothing she could do could make the Dauphin's cause more hopeless than it already was.

He gave his consent to the expedition hurriedly, and was now eager for Jeanne to be off. Her petition was granted. It only remained to go.

III

CHINON

IT was a cold, damp evening in early spring.¹ The little *Place* outside de Baudricourt's house was half filled by a waiting, eager crowd. Before the door stood six or seven fine horses, saddled and equipped for a long journey; and on the steps, dark against the ruddy light from the great fire in the guard-room within, a little group of men, talking earnestly, round a central figure.

One by one lights began to tremble in the casement windows of the houses around, through the raw, misty air. The horses' breath went up like steam as they tossed their heads and their jingling bridles, stamping noisily on the slippery, muddy cobblestones. A continual stream of people poured through the grim old archway and joined the waiting, shivering crowd. A drizzling misty rain began to fall. Some of the women

¹ February 23rd, 1429.

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were weeping,—women always loved Jeanne wherever she went; children were held high in their fathers' arms that they might see the girl who was riding to save France for the King; many no doubt thought the whole thing folly, sharing de Baudricourt's former opinion of Jeanne, and these discussed the expedition critically; perhaps even then a few wondered if she was indeed a witch. But the greater number of these simple folk believed in her. Her piety and holiness had won the hearts of all the inhabitants of Vaucouleurs.

There must have been something extraordinarily attractive about the slender, dark-haired peasant-girl, with her frank boyish face, and untroubled eyes; so curiously silent and reserved; surrounded by a halo of mystery, though absolutely one of themselves—the mystery of daily converse with the angels, and of a supernatural vocation comprehended imperfectly by these rough, kindly peasants, and more clearly by a few simple souls of nobler birth, like Jean de Metz and his friend Bertrand de Poulengey, who had offered to escort her to the Dauphin.

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Suddenly the little group in the doorway opened, the serving-men sprang to the horses' heads, and Jeanne, surrounded by her escort, came down the steps in the man's riding-dress of rough gray wool, which her friends in Vaucouleurs had given her; de Baudricourt's sword (which he had just presented to her) by her side; and the murmur of the crowd swelled to a cry!

"How can she dare?" wailed the women, as Jeanne, aided by her two knights sprang into her saddle, and looked around with clear fearless eyes. "Are you not afraid, Jeanne, with so great a journey before you, and the road full of enemies?" faltered a friend in the nearest group; and the Maid's answer rang out in the clear sweet voice which even her enemies spoke of as "womanly": "I fear them not! I have a sure road! if the enemy are on my road I have God with me who knows how to prepare the way to the Lord Dauphin. I was born to do this!"¹

All thought of self was gone! The shy, shrinking, silent peasant girl, who knew not

¹ Deposition of Henri Leroyer, p. 228.

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how to ride or fight, was lost in this being with a supernatural vocation, who took her place with gentle dignity amongst the men-at-arms, between the two knights who had undertaken to bring her to the Dauphin; both of whom felt, as they testified afterwards, that she was a saint entrusted to their guardianship, and not merely the bravest woman they had ever known; in whose presence a rough word or oath or wicked thought was impossible.

Her preparation, though not her warfare, was accomplished! The crowd pressed around for one last look and word as the young noblemen and their servants mounted their horses, and the party turned to salute de Baudricourt standing on the guardroom steps, still perhaps a little doubtful if he was not making a fool of himself in countenancing such an expedition at all! His attitude was that of a man who allows himself to try every possible or impossible means of curing an evil which he fears to be hopeless; there is no evidence to show that he ever admitted or believed in Jeanne's Divine commission.

“Go then, come what may!” was all he

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could bring himself to say in farewell, as the horses' hoofs clattered and slid over the slippery stones, and the slim boyish figure in the picturesque dress, with Jean de Metz and Bertrand de Poulengey on either hand and the serving-men riding behind disappeared in the gathering darkness, and the sound of the hoof-beats died in the rain.

The Dauphin was at Chinon, a magnificent fortified castle on the Vienne, a tributary of the Loire. It was one of the few fortresses which still remained to him. A long and very dangerous journey lay before Jeanne's little party. One hundred and sixty leagues of very rough country lay between Chinon and Vaucouleurs; and at least five important rivers, including the Seine and the Loire, had to be crossed. The whole territory was teeming with Burgundians besides being infested by robbers and freebooters who plundered and murdered everyone who came in their way; and their chances of escape if they were attacked were small indeed. There were only seven in the little band: Jeanne herself; her two knights, who had answered to de Baudricourt for

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her safety; the King's messenger, Colet de Vienne (who had probably come to Vaucouleurs a few days before to announce the defeat at Rouvrai by which Jeanne's prediction was confirmed, and who took this opportunity of returning to Chinon); and their three serving men. To avoid the great dangers of the journey, chiefly on Jeanne's account, they travelled by night and rested by day, as far as possible.

Almost the first thing Jeanne said to her friends after their departure was that it would be good if they could hear Mass every day. "But while we were in the enemies' country," says Bertrand de Poulengey, pathetically,¹ "we could not, for fear of being recognized." Her wonderful purity and childlike simplicity made the deepest impression on her escort. De Poulengey, after speaking of the "great goodness" he saw in her, says: ² "I felt myself inspired by her words, for I saw she was indeed a messenger of God; never did I see in her any evil, but always she was as good as if she had been a saint"; and de Metz, speaking

¹ P. 230.

² P. 231.

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like his friend, twenty-seven years later, tells us: ¹ “On the way, I asked her many times if she would really do all she said. ‘Have no fear,’ she answered us, ‘what I am commanded to do, I will do; my brothers in Paradise have told me how to act: it is four or five years since my brothers in Paradise and my Lord—that is, God—told me that I must go and fight in order to regain the Kingdom of France’ . . . I had absolute faith in her. Her words and her ardent faith in God inflamed me. I believe she was sent from God; she never swore, she loved to attend Mass, she confessed often, and was zealous in giving alms. Many times was I obliged to hand out to her the money she gave for the love of God. While we were with her we found her always good, simple, pious, an excellent Christian, well-behaved, and Godfearing.” Nothing can be added to this testimony. Perhaps Jeanne’s greatest charm was her absolute lack of self-consciousness. She was as simple as a little child; and it was this beautiful mixture of simplicity and courage which appealed to

¹ Pp. 224-5.

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every chivalrous instinct of her two young knights, and made Jeanne as safe among her little escort as she would have been at home by her mother's side.

Charles VII was surrounded as usual by a group of bad advisers, conspicuous amongst whom was the minister La Trémoille, who never believed in Jeanne's mission, and did his best from first to last to prejudice the King against her. When Jeanne and her friends reached Chinon, escaping by a miracle a last ambushade laid for them (most probably by La Trémoille's connivance), and found themselves at the gates of the fine old castle, rising steep above the wide waters of the Vienne, leave to see the Dauphin was refused to her.

This was again the minister's doing. His ascendancy over the Dauphin's weak mind was such that he could do anything with his master, and it suited his policy to make Charles believe that matters were not so bad as they really were. Another hostile member of the Court was the Archbishop of Rheims, Regnault de Chartres, who, though never condescending to La Trémoille's base-

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ness, opposed Jeanne openly, and never from first to last believed in her. He was a rich, powerful, and influential prelate, and his friendship and countenance would have done much for poor Jeanne at this stage of her fortunes; but he firmly believed that the only way to restore peace to France was the reconciliation of the Duke of Burgundy with the Dauphin. All his efforts and prayers were directed to this end, and this explains his hostile attitude to the Maid who came to restore her King by force of arms.

The whole Court was hopelessly in debt. ¹“In those days,” says one of the Queen’s ladies, “there was in the kingdom—especially in that part still obedient to the King—such great calamity and penury as was sad to see; so that the followers of the King were almost in despair: this I know, because my husband was then Receiver-General, and at that time [when Jeanne arrived] neither of the King’s money nor his own had he four crowns.” There was literally no money to pay the tradesmen who supplied them with food and the servants who

¹ P. 270.

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waited on them; but still the Dauphin deliberately chose to shut his eyes to these and the greater miseries behind them, and to live a gay, luxurious life with his very easy-going courtiers. Anything was better than to face the horror of the situation. Jeanne's coming was a direct appeal to do this, therefore the delay in allowing her to appear before the Dauphin and deliver her message. Her eager spirit chafed at its three days of waiting, for from hour to hour it seemed as if Orleans must fall, and to save it was part of her mission.

The time, however, was not wasted. A number of ecclesiastics, commissioned by the Council of the Dauphin to question Jeanne closely and to report her answers, went down to the little hostel where she was lodged, and examined her carefully as to her past life and her mission to Charles. But they could get nothing from her. "I must speak to the Dauphin," she repeated again and again; "to him alone I will tell everything. I have two things to do—to deliver Orleans, and to lead my King to his crowning at Rheims." On the report of

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these commissioners two Franciscan friars were sent to Domremy to find out from the inhabitants all that could be learnt about Jeanne's previous life and character. And on the same day a small body of armed men came riding in hot haste from beleaguered Orleans, to ask the Dauphin if he had heard anything of a wonderful Maid, of whom news had come to them from Gien. She was on her way, it was said, to deliver Orleans. Had the Dauphin seen her? Had she arrived at Chinon? Dunois himself, and all the other captains in Orleans, were "strangely moved" at the news, and prayed Charles to confirm it.

It was necessary that a definite answer should be given to these messengers. The report of the commissioners who had interviewed Jeanne being favourable, it was announced to her that the Dauphin would receive her. She had spent the greater part of the three days in fervent prayer that God would turn his heart, and beseeching Heaven to send him a sign by which he might believe in her Divine commission.

In the evening of March 10th the sum-

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mons came to the royal presence. The country girl, in her odd homespun costume—"a poor little shepherdess," as she is called by an eye-witness—her thick black hair clipped close round her ears like a man, was ushered into a great hall blazing with torches and hundreds of wax lights, and half filled with a brilliant crowd of gaily dressed men and women. Jeanne's superb simplicity carried her triumphantly through what most people would find a very trying ordeal. She did not hesitate or waver. Walking in her rough leather riding-boots across the shining polished floor, her sword by her side, she made her way directly to a group of young men and knelt down before one plainly dressed, who seemed inclined at first to turn away. "Noble Dauphin," she cried, clasping his knees, "may God grant you a long life!" The young man, smiling, assured her that she had made a mistake: "I am not the King, he is yonder," he said. And the Court held its breath, men and women crowding round, half laughing, half awestruck.

Did she really know who he was? It was

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a supreme moment! "In God's name, you are the Dauphin and none other," cried the fearless voice, and the tension broke. After all, there must be something supernatural, whether of God or the devil, whispered the courtiers, about a rough peasant girl who recognizes the King she has never seen before among three hundred of his friends! But Jeanne was still on her knees before Charles. "Gentle Dauphin," she said, "my name is Jeanne the Maid.¹ The King of Heaven sends you word by me that you shall be consecrated and crowned in the City of Rheims, and shall be lieutenant of the King of Heaven Who is the King of France." Then, rising, she prayed him to come aside with her; she had a sign, she said, to give him which would prove whether he could trust her or not. It is almost certain, though Jeanne could never be induced to speak of it, even under cruel pressure from her judges at her trial, that this "sign" related to the Dauphin's claim to be the true King of France. Jeanne was able to set his mind at rest on this matter, telling

¹ "Jehanne la Pucelle."

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him that he was indeed the rightful King, and she was sent to crown him. As he had spoken to no one on the subject it was evident that Jeanne's knowledge of his trouble was supernatural.

Yet, even after this, we are astonished to hear that the first interview had scarcely any effect. La Trémoille, for his own reasons, tried to persuade the King that Jeanne's powers, such as they were, were not of God; and, in spite of the sign, Charles would not commit himself to any definite promise, or declare himself convinced of her Divine mission.

The Duke d'Alençon, however, one of the princes present at the scene in the great hall, was so much struck by what he heard and saw that from the moment when Charles presented him to the Maid he became one of her staunchest friends, being convinced she was no impostor, but truly sent by God, as she said. He was away hunting, he tells us, when she arrived at Chinon, and entered the audience chamber just at the moment when she recognized the Dauphin. As he approached, a little later, she asked his

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name. "It is the Duke d'Alençon," replied Charles. "You are welcome!" said Jeanne to the Duke; "the more princes we have of the blood royal the better it will be for us." D'Alençon's opinion never changed. He, and a little later Dunois, and the terrible La Hire, "were of those who said they would follow the Maid whithersoever she should choose to lead them."

A tremendous impression was made at the same time by the fact that a warning which Jeanne had spoken on her way into the King's presence was fulfilled within an hour. As she crossed the courtyard one of the guard insulted her, using blasphemous language. Jeanne always hated swearing; as every one who had to do with her in the fighting which followed testified, as to a special and apparently unusual trait in her character. She turned to the man, and rebuked him roundly, asking him how he, who was so near his death, dared to blaspheme God? As she was talking to Charles, half an hour later, the soldier in his heavy armour fell into the river and was instantly drowned.

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The next day she heard the "King's Mass," after which Charles again spoke to her, in the presence of the Duke d'Alençon and La Trémoille. As they were talking Jeanne said suddenly: "Gentle Dauphin, will you make me a present?" Charles asked her what she wished. "Give me," she answered, "the Kingdom of France! The King of Heaven will give it back to you, so pleased will He be with the gift which you have made Him." Charles, it is said, reflected for a moment and then replied: "It is well! I consent!" Then she told him that the King of Heaven returned the gift which the Dauphin had just offered, and gave it back to him as its rightful monarch.

In the afternoon she rode for some time with lance in rest before the Dauphin and the Duke d'Alençon, and the latter was so pleased with her skill in managing both horse and weapon that he made her a present of a charger.

Still nothing definite was done. Clergy and learned doctors saw her, and put many questions to her; but she answered very little. Day after day went by. Meeting the

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Dauphin one morning she threw herself at his feet and cried: "Gentle Dauphin, why do you refuse to believe me? I tell you that God has compassion upon you, and upon your kingdom and your people; for St. Louis and St. Charlemagne are kneeling before Him, praying for you!" She reminded him of the sign she had given him at their first meeting. In spite of himself Charles was touched. Again he consulted his Council as to what steps should be taken as regards Jeanne, and was advised to send her to Poitiers, there to be examined by a commission of prelates and doctors of the University of Paris, who should pronounce finally upon her vocation; and that Charles should be guided by their verdict.

To Poitiers, therefore, Jeanne was taken, and lodged in the house of the Solicitor-General, while for three weeks many of the most learned bishops and divines in France sat in judgement upon her claims, and decided at last that they could find no evil in her. Her fearlessness seems to have astonished her judges. One learned Dominican put a difficult question: "You ask for men-

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at-arms to raise the siege of Orleans. Why do you need men if you are sent from God, who can work without human means?" "The soldiers will fight, but God will give the victory," said Jeanne quietly. Many questions were put to her about her visions. Another Dominican, who spoke French with a very strong provincial accent, and was happily blessed with a keen sense of humour, inquired in what language St. Michael spoke to her. "In better French than yours," flashed back Jeanne; and the good Father, who tells us the story himself, adds: "which was true enough, for I spoke Limousin." The same friar asked her for a sign. "I have not come to Poitiers to show signs," she answered; "my sign will be the raising of the siege of Orleans. Give me men-at-arms, few or many, and I will go!" "I know not A from B," she said later, "but this I know, that the King of Heaven sends me to raise the siege of Orleans, and to lead the Dauphin to be crowned at Rheims."

It should be remembered that this Council was at least as important as that of Rouen, which two years later condemned her to

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death; and its decision in Jeanne's favour has all the more value because its president, the Archbishop of Rheims, was, as we have seen, in no sense her friend or partisan. She made in the presence of her judges four predictions, all of which came to pass within fifteen years, and two immediately.

(1) The English should be beaten, the siege of Orleans raised, and the town delivered from its enemies.

(2) The Dauphin should be crowned at Rheims.

(3) Paris should return to its allegiance to Charles.

(4) The Duke of Orleans (taken prisoner at Agincourt, 1415) should come back from England.¹

About this time the Franciscan friars sent to Domremy returned with the most favourable reports of Jeanne's past life. Nothing of any kind could be said against her even by her enemies. The Dauphin could hesitate no longer. "As Jeanne declares," ran the formal verdict of the Council, "that the sign which we have asked of her will be the

¹ He returned in 1440.

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deliverance of Orleans, she should be sent there with men-at-arms; for to doubt her further, or to throw difficulties in her way, would be to resist the Holy Spirit, and to render ourselves unworthy of the Help of God."

The third great ordeal was triumphantly passed. She was sent back to Chinon and Tours, where she was equipped for her expedition to Orleans. The people of Poitiers, who loved and venerated her, crowded round her to say farewell. It was the 15th of April, 1429. Clad in white armour she mounted her horse at the corner of the Rue St. Etienne. "Adieu, adieu," she cried, as her friends pressed round; "*Messire m'aidera*"; and so passed, amidst their prayers and tears, with her royal escort and her guard invisible of Angels; riding along the broad north road to Orleans in the brilliant spring sunshine; riding into the unknown future to fulfil her threefold destiny: martyr—saint—deliverer of the realm of France!

PART II
CHINON TO RHEIMS
APRIL 15TH—JULY 17TH, 1429

I
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BEFORE Jeanne could leave Chinon much preparation was necessary. It was a question only of days as to how long Orleans could hold out, for the besieged were starving. A great quantity of supplies had been hastily collected at Blois, about half-way up the Loire, and it was decided that a small army should be sent with Jeanne at its head to force an entry at any cost into the beleaguered town. The siege was indeed practically a blockade by this time, and it was imperatively necessary that this should be done. Meantime, a military "household" was appointed for Jeanne, consisting of Jean d'Aulon, one of the most trusted friends of

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Dunois, a man of middle age, who was to be her squire, and who served her faithfully as her devoted friend; her two former knights, de Metz and de Poulengey; her two younger brothers, Jean and Pierre; a couple of pages—one of whom, Louis de Coutes, gives most interesting details of his service with the Maid; and her chaplain, Brother Jean Pasquerel, a hermit friar of St. Augustine, who followed her fortunes from this time until her capture at Compiègne.

The Dauphin presented Jeanne with a fine horse, and suit of white armour, but instead of accepting the sword he offered she begged that they would send to Ste. Catherine de Fierbois, in which church she had heard three masses just before arriving at Chinon, where they would find behind the altar, hidden in the earth, an old sword engraved with five crosses on the blade. This, she said, was revealed to her by her Voices. The sword was found, exactly as she had said, and the priests at the church had it cleaned and carefully polished. "The rust," we are told, "fell off at once, without effort." They sent it to her in a scabbard of crimson vel-

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vet, richly embroidered; and the priests at Tours, whither Jeanne was now sent, with her household, to await the arrival of her army, gave her another sheath, of cloth of gold. Jeanne, who evidently considered these gifts more ornamental than useful, tells us she had a third scabbard made of strong leather; a practical touch which is characteristic.

It was at Tours that her banner was made from the design given to her by the Angels. There is great diversity in the evidence as to the number and description of Jeanne's banners, but it is probable that there were three; two, large; and a pennon or banneret which was borne by her squire when she did not carry it herself, as she generally did. They are described by Brother Pasquerel¹ and by Jeanne herself. "The Messengers of her Lord . . . had told her to take the banner of her Lord. It was for this she had her banner made, on which was painted the image of Our Saviour seated in judgement on the clouds of Heaven, with an Angel holding in his hand a fleur-de-lis which

¹ P. 283.

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Christ was blessing. I was at Tours with her when this banner was painted." This was Jeanne's standard, which she loved so well that when asked at her trial: "Which did you care for most, your banner or your sword?" she cried: "Better, forty times better, my banner than my sword." It was this banner which she held in her hand in Rheims Cathedral at the coronation of the King a few months later. "The field was sprinkled with lilies," she tells us;¹ "the world was painted there with an angel at each side; it was white, of the white cloth called 'bocassin'; there was written above, I believe, 'Jhesus, Maria'; it was fringed with silk."

Upon the pennon was a representation of the Annunciation. These two banners were made at Tours and blessed in the Church of St. Sauveur, at Blois, for which town, the army having now arrived, Jeanne set out, after ten days' delay. Here the third banner was made, and blessed. ² "At Blois," says her chaplain, "she told me to have a banner made, round which the Priests might as-

¹ P. 31.

² P. 284.

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semble, and to have painted thereon the Image of Our Saviour crucified. . . . Jeanne, twice a day, charged me to assemble the Priests round this banner; they then sang anthems and hymns to the Blessed Mary. Jeanne was with them, permitting only the soldiers who had that day confessed themselves, to join her; she told her people to make confession, if they wished to come to this assemblage. There were Priests always ready to confess those in the army who wished to apply to them." Several of these priests bore witness as to the extraordinary change wrought in the hardened, crime-worn soldiers, whom a French writer describes as "old Armagnac brigands," by Jeanne's influence; and the fact of her insisting upon their all approaching the Sacraments regularly, especially before a battle.

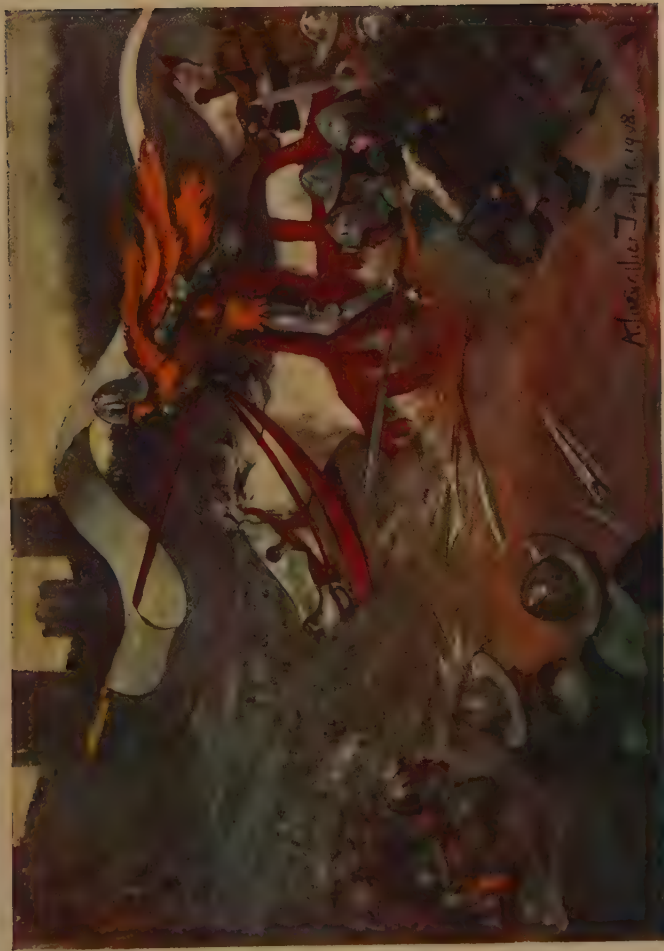
Before leaving Chinon Jeanne had caused to be written and sent to the Duke of Bedford, "so-called Regent of the Kingdom of France for the King of England," a long letter; in which she besought the English to give up the siege and go home. She told them that she was sent by the King of

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Heaven to drive them out of France man by man, and that He would send her power to do it. If they refused, she would, she said, sound so mighty a call to arms as had not been heard in France for a thousand years. She warned them to "beware of the Maid" and remember their sins. "Do not think that right is on your side," she added solemnly: "Never will you hold France from the Son of Mary Who is King of Heaven; but the King Charles, to whom God gave it as true heir." This was written in Holy Week, towards the end of March, 1429.

Needless to say, this warning was not accepted by the English, who were frantic with fury, threatening to burn the writer as well as the herald who had brought the letter, and keeping him a close prisoner against all the rules of war. The feeling of the English about Jeanne throughout was a fairly equal mixture of terror and hatred; both growing in intensity as time went on. They, at least, always sincerely believed her to be a witch. This letter was the first of three, all equally disregarded.

At Blois there was a delay of a few days,



The Maid leading her troops against the English.

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while the convoy of supplies was being got ready. Blois, as well as Orleans, is on the north or right-hand bank of the Loire, and Jeanne was anxious to march direct from one town to the other without crossing the river; but this, she was told, was impossible. The right bank was in the hands of the enemy, and the river must be crossed just above Blois. We are told that some of the wisest of the marshals and captains who surrounded her took advantage of her ignorance of the country to persuade her she was taking the most direct road to Orleans. The army set out on the Wednesday in the week before Ascension Day, April 27th, 1429. It was officered by some of the greatest nobles and finest soldiers of France, including the Duke d'Alençon, and La Hire, a famous captain who had been sent from Orleans to escort Jeanne on her journey thither. This man, who believed implicitly in the Maid from the first, was a rough, passionate soldier, noted even in those grim days for swearing and violence. It is of him that it is recorded that before he went into battle he always said this characteristic prayer: "O Lord God, I pray

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you do for La Hire to-day what he would do for You were You a captain, and La Hire God!" Yet over this man Jeanne's influence was so strong that from the day he met her he began to leave off swearing, and to reform his life; going regularly to confession, and receiving Holy Communion, whenever possible at the same time Jeanne did, and kneeling beside her. But his difficulties in getting rid of the habits of a lifetime were so great that Jeanne, out of sheer pity, allowed him to swear by his stick: "par mon bâton!" "And afterwards, indeed," says the Dominican Friar who tells the tale, "when he was with her, La Hire never swore but by his staff!"

Historians differ as to the number of men under Jeanne's command; some say three, some ten, some twelve thousand; but from the morning of their setting out until the day of her capture she kept her soldiers under strict rule.

Besides insisting upon their approaching the Sacraments regularly, she sternly forbade all drunkenness and profanity, and gave orders that no beggars or camp-followers should be allowed near the army.

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On the morning of departure for Orleans Mass was sung in the open air, outside the walls of Blois. Jeanne and many of her friends received Holy Communion; and, the Mass ended, the final start was made. Forth they set, in the sweet early summer weather, through the flowery, fertile country, with its miles of budding vineyards and wide stretches of pale-blossoming orchards; along the banks of the beautiful, treacherous Loire; the gleaming folds of the great white banner floating before them against the blue sky, upborne by a company of priests chanting the *Veni Creator*; the grand old melody rolling out from thousands of rough throats as the men took up the chant; the great captains, Xaintrilles, La Hire, de Boussac, and the rest, on their richly caparisoned horses; and Jeanne, clad in the white armour given to her by the Dauphin, her head bare, and St. Catherine's sword by her side, mounted on a magnificent black charger, riding near the front where all could see her, cheering and encouraging her men.

The journey took three days. Two nights they slept in the open fields, poor Jeanne in

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full armour, which she found terribly uncomfortable, being "all bruised," as she told her page, from lying on the cold earth in hard steel.

The whole army made a detour south of the Loire, across country, reaching the river again at Chécy, a place two leagues the other side of Orleans. Here Dunois, the noble commander of the besieged town, came to meet Jeanne. She greeted him fearlessly by name, asking if it was he. He answered: '“Yes; and I am very glad of your coming!” ‘Is it you who said I was to come on this side [of the river], and that I should not go direct to the side where Talbot and the English are?’ ‘Yes, and those more wise than I are of the same opinion, for our greater success and safety.’ ‘In God’s Name,’ she then said, ‘the counsel of my Lord is safer and wiser than yours. You thought to deceive me, and it is yourselves who are deceived, for I bring you better succour than has ever come to any general or town whatsoever—the succour of the King of Heaven. This succour does not

¹ P. 234.

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come from me, but from God himself, Who, at the prayers of St. Louis and St. Charlemagne, has had compassion on the town of Orleans.'” This is Dunois’ own account of their meeting.

It is impossible to speak too highly of the magnificent and unfailing generosity with which this noble-hearted soldier treated Jeanne. He was of royal blood; of near kin to the King; one of the first commanders in France, and he had been utterly unsuccessful at Orleans. He received the peasant girl who had come to take the direction of affairs out of his hands without the slightest trace of resentment. Indeed, he treated her throughout as a sort of supernatural being, convinced as he was from the first that this girl of seventeen was indeed sent by God to save France. He gives us himself three facts which made him believe, as he expresses it, that “these deeds were the work of God.” Humanly speaking, Dunois might have made Jeanne’s position not only intolerable, but impossible, as the entire command up to that time had been in his hands. But, like Alençon, La Hire, Xaintrilles, and a

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few others of the best blood and finest chivalry in France, his noble spirit was great enough to accept eclipse behind the brilliant figure of the Heaven-sent Maid, who re-arranged his plans, and took over the command of affairs as if the spirit of Charlemagne himself burnt within her.

Unfortunately this generosity did not extend to all the officers of inferior rank. From the beginning Jeanne had to suffer not only from the hatred of her enemies, but from the jealousy of her friends—or those who should have been her friends. Over and over again we read of quarrels and angry discussions amongst the French captains on account of some fresh order of Jeanne's. They were disgusted to be under the command of a peasant girl—they who, many of them, were old soldiers before she was born. What should such a child know about war? And how could they be sure (when it became abundantly plain that she did know) that she was not a witch, and that the whole thing was not a delusion of Satan! Sometimes these murmurs broke out into passionate anger, and it took all Dunois'

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authority and tact—of which he possessed a large amount—to quiet the disturbance. Unhappily there is no longer any doubt that this jealousy and distrust among her own followers was largely responsible for much that happened after; and this must be remembered all through the short and brilliant campaign to follow.

It was now evident that a mistake had been made in the manner of their approach to Orleans. Dunois had brought a small flotilla of boats to take the greatly needed provisions and their convoy into the starving town. But there was no means of transport across the Loire for the rest of the army, and it was seen that Jeanne's plan to approach by the north bank would have been best. It was hastily arranged that the army should return to Blois, and cross by the bridge there, in consequence of this incredible piece of mismanagement, which entailed nearly a week's delay; and Jeanne was anxious to go back with her men. But Dunois would not hear of this. He sought, he says,¹ "the captains who had charge of

¹ Pp. 234-5.

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the convoy and the army, and besought them, for the welfare of the King, to allow Jeanne to enter Orleans at once; and that they and the army . . . should go down the river to Blois . . . for there was no nearer place of crossing. They consented, and Jeanne then came with me. She had in her hand a banner, white in colour, on which was an image of Our Lord holding in His Hand a lily."

The provisions were by this time packed in the boats, and the wind, which had hitherto been dead against them, suddenly changed and became favourable. Brother Pasqueral adds a vivid touch: ¹"The water was so shallow that the boats could not move upstream. . . . Suddenly the waters rose, and the boats were then able to land on the shore where the [French] army was." "La Hire," says Dunois, "crossed the Loire at the same time as she, and entered the city with her and ourselves. All this was much more the work of God than of man." A nobleman who was present adds to this testimony that: ²"Jeanne had ex-

¹ Pp. 284-5.

² Pp. 242-3.

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pressly predicted that before long the weather and the wind would change, and it happened as she foretold." The convoy, then, with Jeanne and the great captains, passed safely down the Loire to the eastern extremity of the town.

Orleans lay on the north bank of the river, which was here spanned by a beautiful ancient bridge of twenty-two arches which passed over two islets. This was defended by the English at its southern entrance on the opposite bank by a hitherto impregnable fortress, Les Tourelles. Indeed, this southern bank, facing the city, was heavily fortified, and the only means of attacking it was to cross the bridge—in itself dangerous, as it was commanded by several forts—and to storm first the great guardian bastille, Les Tourelles. By land, to north, west, and east the position was even more hopeless. The English had surrounded the city with a line of strong fortifications broken by great towers with terrible threatening names, London, Paris, Rouen, and the like; and these fortifications extended from the north bank of the river, right round Orleans, back

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again to the Loire, the easternmost fort being the great church of St. Loup, near which Jeanne landed, and which was the first fortress to fall. It was impossible to enter the city from any point without running the gauntlet of the enemy. Yet the little band did enter, almost within a stone's-throw of the fortifications, and as Jeanne had foretold, the English watched them pass in perfect silence, and without firing a single shot.

It was eight o'clock in the evening of Friday, April 29th, 1429. Jeanne, shining in her white armour, mounted on a white horse, surrounded by her brilliant escort, her great white banner borne before her by her squire, "was received with as much rejoicing and acclamation from old and young of both sexes, as if she had been an Angel of God; because,"¹ says an eyewitness of the thrilling scene, "we hoped through her to be delivered from our enemies; which indeed was done later." She rode straight to the Cathedral, where, surrounded by the weeping, happy people, she gave thanks to God for having brought her so

¹ P. 246.

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far on her way. She then went on, the people thronging and pressing on all sides, to the house of the Treasurer of the Town, where she was lodged, and where a splendid banquet had been prepared in her honour. No doubt the hungry, weary men who were with Jeanne did justice to the feast, but she herself would only touch a few slices of bread dipped in "eau rougie,"—weak wine-and-water; and then she asked leave to retire for the night, to the room which, according to her invariable custom whenever possible, she shared with her host's little daughter. She had not been out of the saddle all day, nor had she broken bread. Her page tells us: ¹ "She had always most sober habits: many times I saw her eat nothing during a whole day but a morsel of bread. I was astonished," he adds naïvely, "that she ate so little." The next day, Saturday, Dunois set out by the northern bank of the river to meet the army which was making its way round by Blois. Jeanne accompanied him to the outposts, and sat quietly in her saddle, in full range of one of the English forts, until

¹ P. 262.

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he and his little band of men were out of gunshot. In the evening she rode out, without an escort, across the broken bridge towards the great fort of Les Tourelles, where, as soon as they spied her, the English rushed in haste to the battlements, covering her with insults and screaming evil names at her, though not a man dared so much as throw a stone. Glasdale, a Scotsman, the commander, was violently abusive, and Jeanne wept some very bitter tears. Again she summoned them to withdraw, but the only answer was shouts of laughter, and advice to the "milkmaid" to go back to her cows.

On Wednesday morning Dunois returned from Blois with Jeanne's army. She had spent the three days in riding about Orleans and making friends with the people. She went to meet Dunois, who was accompanied by Brother Pasquerel, Jeanne's chaplain, whom she had desired to remain with her troops. Again the English made no attempt to attack; they seemed paralysed with fear. The army was brought in under their very eyes, as the convoy of provisions had been, the week before.

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Jeanne returned to the Treasurer's house, and after dining with her squire, went up to her bedchamber, to take a little rest. It was about three o'clock in the afternoon of Wednesday, May 4th, 1429. Suddenly she leapt from her couch, "still asleep," as D'Aulon tells us, and called loudly to him. He too had been resting, and was awakened by Jeanne's cry. "My Voices tell me to go forth and attack the English." D'Aulon hastily armed her, and she ran downstairs, meeting her page half-way. "Ah, wretched boy, the blood of France is being shed, and you told me not!" she cried to him.¹ "She ordered me to go and look for her horse," says the boy; "when I returned . . . she told me to go and seek her banner, which had been left in her chamber; I passed it to her through the window. Immediately she rode hastily towards the Burgundy gate."² "On the road," says Brother Pasquerel, "she met many wounded soldiers; the sight of them distressed her much." She was guided by the uproar which came from the eastern gate of the town, and made her way

¹ P. 261.

² P. 285.

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at full gallop to the Bastille St. Loup, upon which an attack had been hastily arranged by some of the jealous commanders, without Jeanne's knowledge. It was her first experience of actual hot warfare, and she did not flinch. For upwards of three hours she stood in the thickest of the fight, on the edge of the moat, her banner in her hand, cheering on her men, and urging them to the attack. The English, taken by surprise, fought furiously, and the loss on their side was severe. Dead and dying lay around the fearless girl in her shining armour, for the French, full of new courage, carried all before them. "She did so well," says her confessor, "that by force and violence the fort was at last taken, and all the English who were there were taken prisoners . . . when the fort . . . was taken [many] died there . . . Jeanne was much afflicted when she heard they had died without confession, and pitied them much. On the spot she made her confession. She ordered me to invite the whole army to do likewise, and to give thanks to God for the victory just gained. Otherwise, she said, she would help them no more, but would abandon

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them. On this day, the Eve of Ascension, she predicted that within five days the siege would be raised, and that not a single Englishman would be left within the walls of Orleans."

The journey back to the Cathedral, whither Jeanne went at once to return thanks to God, was a long triumphal procession. The people clustered about her, kissing her hands, her armour, the staff of her banner, with passionate enthusiasm. She rode at the head of her army, flushed and eager with its first success; and darkness fell as the lights twinkled out, and the cressets swung, and the roar of welcome, pierced with cries upon her name, surged and swelled around her, up to the carved portals set in the dim magnificence of the mighty pile, twin-towered, which rose above them as a great rock rises out of a darkening summer sea. It was her first hour of triumph. The great doors swung open, and she entered in and offered it to God.

The next day, Ascension Day, Jeanne would not fight; but she wrote another letter to the English, in the same style as the first, imploring them to withdraw, and yield to the King of Heaven. This second letter was

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tied to an arrow, and shot into the English lines. The only result was a shower of insults. ¹ "At these words," says Brother Pasquerel, "Jeanne began to cry, shedding many tears, and prayed the God of Heaven to come to her aid. Soon she appeared to be consoled, having had, as she said, news from her Lord." She begged her confessor to rise very early next morning, and sing Mass before the army, after hearing her confession. This he did. "She then," he says, "started at once with [her followers] for the attack, which lasted from morning to evening." This attack was made on the Fort of Les Augustins, on the south bank of the Loire, across the bridge. The Fort was at some little distance from the town, and was formerly a Dominican monastery, seized by the English, and converted into a Bastille.

The fighting was fierce and furious, and ended in a complete victory for the French troops. The fort was captured; the greater part of the enemy were killed or taken prisoners; and the few who remained escaped into the huge bastille of Les Tourelles, hard

¹ P. 287.

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by. The second day's fighting ended, like the first, in a general procession, and thanksgiving at the cathedral. This was on Friday, May 6th. Jeanne was always accustomed to fast on Friday, but could not, says her confessor, to-day, because she was "too troubled." She therefore ate her frugal supper of a slice of bread soaked in wine and water; and the meal was scarcely over before one of the captains came to her to say that the Council which had just been held had decided that no fighting should take place next day: ¹ "That they had taken into consideration the small number of their forces in comparison with the forces of the English, and the abundant grace which God had granted them in the success already obtained. The town is full of supplies . . . it does not seem," he ended by saying, "expedient to the Council that the army should go forth to-morrow." "You have been to your Counsel," Jeanne answered him, "and I have been to mine; and, believe me, the Counsel of God will be accomplished and will succeed. . . ." Then turning to Brother

¹ P. 288.

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Pasquerel, she bade him rise even earlier next morning to say Mass, saying, she had more and greater things to accomplish, and sending a thrill to the hearts of her friends by foretelling that she should be wounded in the shoulder.

At day-dawn on Saturday, May 7th, Mass was sung before the army, and the plan of attack was arranged. Jeanne's eagerness and enthusiasm swept away all objections. Les Tourelles, the great bastille at the end of the bridge, the most important of all the English forts, was to be stormed; and for about ten hours the battle raged furiously. Shortly after noon, as she stood close to the walls, banner in hand, encouraging her men, she was struck by an arrow on the right shoulder. The wound was very painful, and some of the soldiers wanted to "charm" it; but to this Jeanne absolutely refused to consent. "I would rather die first," she said firmly. A simple dressing of olive oil and lard was applied, and Jeanne, who had cried a little, like a frightened child, from the shock and pain, confessed herself and spent a short time in prayer.

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Then she hurried back to the attack. The English had believed Jeanne slain by the arrow which wounded her; when they saw her return and, standing at the edge of the trench waving her banner, cry to her men: "Forward, forward, the day is yours—enter in!" they lost heart, believing her to be indeed a witch. The French, who had begun to fall back, being outnumbered, rallied at her cry, and rushed the last defences. Nothing could withstand that gallant onset. The great gate was battered in, the keep was filled with madly fighting men. Glasdale, the English commander, appeared upon the parapet, and hurled a foul name or two at her. "Yield thee, yield thee to the King of Heaven," she cried; "I have a great pity for thy soul." She had scarcely spoken when the tower giving way he fell headlong into the Loire, and was drowned. All the English were either killed or taken prisoners, the greater number being drowned. Les Tourelles was taken! Orleans was delivered, though as yet even Jeanne knew it not! Through a sea of passionate enthusiasm she passed that night to the Cathedral,

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filled with an ecstatic, wildly-excited crowd, and knelt there, weeping for joy and wonder among the weeping people. Surely, even her enemies must believe in her now! Earnestly she prayed, too, for the souls departed, unshriven and un comforted; for her enemies as well as those who had died for France; and the people, kneeling in tearful, speechless thanksgiving, gazed on her as upon "a thing Divine."

And next day the most wonderful thing of all happened. In the night the English had stealthily withdrawn from their strongholds and drawn themselves up in battle array. Though it was Sunday (May 8th, 1429) it was agreed that it would be necessary to fight. ¹ "I saw those of Orleans," says one who was present, "preparing for a great conflict against the English, who were drawn up in order of battle. Seeing this, Jeanne went out to the soldiers; and then she was asked, if it was well to fight against the English on that day, being Sunday. To which she answered, that she must hear Mass. And then she sent to fetch

¹ P. 249.

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a table, and had the ornaments of the Church brought, and two Masses were celebrated, which she and the whole army heard with great devotion. Mass being ended, Jeanne asked if the English had their faces turned towards us; she was told no, that their faces were turned towards Meung. Hearing this, she said: 'In God's name, they are going; let them depart; and let us give thanks to God and pursue them no further, because it is Sunday.'"

Smitten with supernatural dread, the English had abandoned everything—fortifications, bastilles, and heavy cannon, and fled from the face of the wonderful Maid, who had kept her word and raised the siege, and fought like Messire St. Michael himself.

Orleans was delivered! She had done in four days what every one had declared to be impossible; she had succeeded where the greatest soldiers in France had failed. As she rode on her white charger that night in the procession which went from church to church, delirious with joy, winding up at the great Cathedral, she told herself that the first part of her mission was accomplished.

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God had delivered Orleans, the key to the whole of Southern France, by the hand of a woman. Nothing was wanting now, but the crowning of the King.

II

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JEANNE left Orleans on May 10th, 1429, two days after the raising of the siege. The Dauphin, who had waited at Chinon, now came to meet her at Tours, and saluted her with the greatest joy, embracing her in the presence of the whole army, as though she had been of royal blood. But Jeanne, kneeling humbly before him, besought him to come at once to Rheims, there to be crowned.

From Tours the Dauphin proceeded to his castle of Loches, whither Jeanne, Dunois, and the other captains accompanied him; and here began another series of long, irritating delays. The advisers of the King looked upon the deliverance of Orleans merely as a piece of good luck; or, at best, as the result of supreme daring; but they were as far as ever from accepting the girl

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who had wrought the wonder as the chosen instrument of God. La Trémoille was firmly opposed to Jeanne, and Charles, with hopeless vacillation, spent most of his time in long consultations with a few favourites as to whether it would really be possible to go to Rheims or not.

“At Loches,” says Dunois,¹ “after the raising of the siege of Orleans, I remember that one day the King being in his private room, Jeanne and I went to seek him. Before entering she knocked at the door, and as soon as she had entered she knelt before the King, and, embracing his knees, said these words: ‘Noble Dauphin! hold no longer these many and long councils, but come quickly to Rheims to take the crown for which you are worthy!’ ‘Is it your Counsel who told you this?’ said Christopher d’Harcourt. ‘Yes,’ she answered. ‘And my Counsel urges me to this most of all.’ ‘Will you not say here, in presence of the King,’ added the Bishop, ‘What manner of Counsel it is which thus speaks to you?’ ‘I think I understand,’ she said, colouring,

¹ P. 238.

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‘what you want to know; and I will tell you willingly. . . . When I am vexed that faith is not readily placed in what I wish to say in God’s name, I retire alone and pray to God. I complain to Him that those whom I address do not believe me more readily; and, my prayer ended, I hear a Voice which says to me: “Daughter of God! go on! go on! go on! I will be thy Help: go on!” and when I hear this Voice, I have great joy. I would I could always hear it thus.’ And in repeating to us this language of her Voice, she was—strange to say!—in a marvellous rapture, raising her eyes to Heaven.”

Another day, when she had made the same request, and Charles stood hesitating, Jeanne threw herself on her knees before him, crying: “Sire, I shall scarcely last another year—make good use of me while you have me!”

The march to Rheims, beset with grave peril, through a country almost entirely in the enemy’s hands, was at last declared utterly impossible; and even Jeanne was brought to see the necessity of clearing the

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way before it would be safe for the Dauphin to pass. She agreed to take the joint command of a small army with the Duke d'Alençon (who was instructed to do nothing without consulting her), and to endeavour to drive the English and Burgundians out of the valley of the Loire. It was believed that if this could be done, the way would be open to Rheims; and Jeanne recognized that this was the only way to accomplish the second part of her mission.

The Duke, who was only four-and-twenty, had just ended a captivity of five years in an English prison, and his young wife grieved bitterly that he should so soon leave her again, and run the risk of a second capture. "Jeannette," she cried to the girl who was to share the young Duke's dangers in the new campaign: "I am terribly afraid for my husband! It is but yesterday he was ransomed from the English, and we had to pay so much for the ransom that I could wish from my heart he were going to stay at home!"

"Madame la Duchesse," answered Jeanne to this peculiarly French outburst of mingled

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affection and prudence, "have no fear! I will bring back your husband safe and sound; and in even better case than now";—a promise which she faithfully kept; and of which she never failed to remind the Duke, sometimes rather to his mortification.

The place chosen for the assemblage of the army was Selles, in Berry. Amongst the hundreds of recruits attracted thither by the great and growing fame of Jeanne d'Arc came two young noblemen, grandsons of Bertrand de Guesclin, Gui and André de Laval. A letter from the elder to his mother and grandmother at home gives a vividly descriptive picture of Jeanne, unfortunately too long for quotation. "To see her and hear her speak seems to me a thing Divine," exclaims the lad.

Speaking of the extraordinary enthusiasm excited by the Maid, and of the arrival at Selles of one great captain after another, Gui de Laval adds: "I hope we shall soon get to work! God grant it may be so! But everyone here has so good a hope in God that I am sure He will help us." This was on June 8th, two days after Jeanne's arrival

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at Selles. The next day she returned with the whole army to Orleans, where she was welcomed with passionate joy.

The giving up of her own will in this matter of the Loire campaign is another proof of Jeanne's great and genuine humility. Knowing, as she did, that the supernatural forces with her were infinitely greater than the material forces against her, it had seemed to her the easiest and most natural thing in the world to push on at once to Rheims. But when it was clearly pointed out that the dangers of such a journey were too great to risk, she immediately gave in without arguing further, and set to work to do her best to remove the danger, and drive out the enemy. She was as prudent as she was brave, and as brave as she was humble, and she greatly needed both prudence and courage now! She did not, as has been well pointed out,¹ love fighting for its own sake, but for the sake of France, and she never allowed a victory to make her presumptuous. Her military genius was a supernatural gift which she used for her country, but laid

¹ By M. Petit de Julleville.

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aside when the battle or the council was over, like her sword and her white armour; and became then a humble, gentle peasant-girl who spent nearly all her time in prayer. And these two elements, the natural and supernatural, were completely fused into one beautiful nature, the very reason for whose existence seemed to be, to do the Will of God! "Speak, for Thy servant heareth!" might well have been the motto of Jeanne d'Arc.

Two days were passed at Orleans, and on June 11th a start was made for Jargeau, a town a few leagues off, up the Loire, where the Duke of Suffolk was strongly intrenched with the greater part of the garrison which had escaped from Orleans. Next day, Sunday, the town was taken by storm. Jeanne, before sounding the assault, asked the garrison to surrender, but they would not. During the fighting she gaily reminded the Duke d'Alençon of her promise to the Duchess, crying out the next moment: "Fair Duke, come speedily away from there, or you will be killed by that engine." As he moved away, a cannon-ball struck

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the nobleman who had taken his place, killing him instantly.

A heavy stone from the ramparts struck Jeanne on the helmet, knocking her off a scaling-ladder, but leaping up, though stunned and giddy, she grasped her banner, crying: "Forward! forward! God has delivered the English into our hands!" The men, stung to fury by the sight of her danger, rushed the ramparts, fighting like tigers. Five hundred English were slain. The day was won. Suffolk and his brother were taken captive, with many others. The town was sacked and almost destroyed.

Next day, Monday, June 13th, Jeanne and the Duke d'Alençon returned to Orleans to send the news of their success to the Dauphin; and on the following Wednesday they set off at the head of the army to Meung-sur-Loire, a small town about the same distance from Orleans as Jargeau, but down the river. This was taken, and they then proceeded down the Loire to Beaugency, where the English garrison was strongly intrenched in the old castle. As Jeanne and the other leaders were preparing to storm the fortress

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news was brought that the Sieur de Richemont, the Constable of France, had arrived with a strong force to put himself at the disposal of the Dauphin. This complicated matters sadly. Richemont had once been a royal favourite, and had indeed introduced La Trémoille, his special friend, to the notice of Charles. But La Trémoille, with despicable meanness, succeeded not only in prejudicing the Dauphin against the Constable, but in banishing Richemont from the court; and Charles had unfortunately forbidden the Duke d'Alençon to receive him if he joined the army. The Duke declared to Jeanne that if the Constable was allowed to join forces with them, he, for his part, must withdraw. Jeanne, deeply grieved at the whole affair, and feeling most keenly that at such a time not a man could be spared from the cause of France, finally persuaded him to stay, promising to do her best to make peace between Richemont and the Dauphin, if he did; and to explain the whole affair satisfactorily to the latter.

The Constable, however, greeted Jeanne very brusquely. "I know not," he said

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contemptuously, "if you are of God or the devil. If you are of God, I fear you not! If you are of the devil I fear you still less!" The next day, June 17th, the garrison of Beaugency yielded, and on the 18th marched out, ignorant of the fact that a strong reinforcement from Paris under Fastolf and Talbot was only a couple of leagues away, hurrying to its relief.

As the English commanders of the relieving force did not consider themselves strong enough to attack the French army, they retreated towards Patay, and took cover among the woods. Jeanne wanted to pursue, but Talbot, who was most anxious to take the French at a disadvantage, concealed his men so cleverly in what was really a great ambuscade that none of the French commanders had the least idea where they were hidden. There was a talk of calling a halt. "In God's name," cried Jeanne, "do nothing of the sort! We must fight! We shall have them, were they hidden in the clouds!" When they pressed her to sound a halt, she said: "The gentle Dauphin shall have to-day the greatest victory he has ever gained.



The Trial of Jeanne d'Arc.

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This I know, for my Voices have told me!"

Just at this moment a stag, terrified by the approach of so many armed men, started up amongst the bracken almost at their feet, and dashed into a thicket not far off. Loud cries and shouts betrayed the presence of their hidden foes. Clearly, St. Hubert was fighting for France! The battle which followed was sharp and long. Owing to some fatal mistake only one wing of the English army was brought into action, the other retreating. Between 4,000 and 5,000 English were slain or captured. Fastolf escaped on horseback (a feat for which he was later on deprived of his Order of the Garter), Talbot was taken prisoner.

The French victory was complete; the greatest, as Jeanne had foretold, that the Dauphin had ever gained. The campaign was over; the enemy utterly routed and in full retreat; the Valley of the Loire was clear.

At last the way was open to Rheims; where the Mission of the Maid of France would be consummated in the coronation of her King.

So, at least, did she believe, then!

III

RHEIMS

LA TRÉMOILLE'S jealousy of Jeanne's influence over the Dauphin and his personal dislike of her threatened to keep matters at a standstill even now. He was supplying Charles with money from his own enormous private resources, and consequently had him very much in his power. While personal and popular enthusiasm for the miraculous Maid spread over France like a tidal wave; while the army, loyal to a man, clamoured only to be led by her to victory, the political hatred and jealousy of statesmen, and even of prelates such as Regnault de Chartres, put endless obstacles in poor Jeanne's path. Such men criticized and opposed all her schemes; worked secretly, with inconceivable blindness and want of true patriotism, to undo all the good she had done; and utterly scouted all belief in her Divine mission. No wonder that, even at

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the height of her fortunes, she always looked sad. Never, perhaps, was a heroine less appreciated than Jeanne d'Arc! "The victory of Patay," wrote a friend to the Duke of Milan, "was a downright miracle of Heaven." Yet even Patay could not convince the enemies who should have been her friends.

When Jeanne presented herself before the Dauphin after the battle he received her with great coldness. She besought him to restore Richemont to favour, and told the story of his generosity. La Trémoille intervened and Jeanne was defeated. Charles declared that sooner than have Richemont at his coronation he would rather not be crowned at all. The Constable, now formally deprived of his office, took a very noble revenge. He went off with his army to the West of France, and began a campaign against the English on his own account. The Dauphin now completely changed his manner to Jeanne, and told her that he thought she had done enough for him, and ought to take a little rest. At Châteauneuf fresh councils were held. The advisers of

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Charles wanted him to go to Normandy, but, says Dunois, ¹“the Maid was always of opinion that it was necessary to go to Rheims, that the King should be consecrated, giving as a reason that, if once the King were consecrated and crowned, the power of his adversaries would decline, and that in the end they would be past the power of doing any injury, either to him or to his kingdom. And all consented to her opinion.”

For once she prevailed. The eighty-league march to Rheims was decided on, and Gien-sur-Loire was appointed as the starting-point. Thither Jeanne and her army went at once, followed by the Dauphin and his train, and here they remained yet three days, while his councillors made one final, futile, fruitless effort to dissuade Charles from going any further! Jeanne, weary of the ceaseless discussion, left Gien with her men on June 27th, on the first stage of the march.

Their confidence in her was boundless. The little army of twelve thousand with which she started increased daily as volunteers from every village and town in the

¹ P. 239.

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countryside poured in; gentlemen too poor to provide horse and armour accepting service gladly as archers or foot-soldiers, merely for the honour of fighting for France in the army of the Maid. Two days later the Dauphin joined them, and on July 1st they reached Auxerre, a town held by the Burgundians. Jeanne wanted to storm it, but La Trémoille, who had been privately negotiating on his own account, persuaded Charles to forbid the attack, and to consent to buy provisions from the Auxerrois to revictual the army. For this piece of diplomacy that astute person pocketed a bribe of two thousand golden crowns, offered by the threatened town.

They left Auxerre on July 3rd, and the next day a couple of small towns made their submission. From one of these Jeanne sent a letter to the "noblemen, citizens and inhabitants of the town of Troyes" inviting them to be present at the King's coronation at Rheims, and begging them to welcome him gladly when he appeared before the walls of their town, which lay but a league or two away.

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This letter was received in Troyes with much amusement. Those in authority declared it to be "devoid of common sense," and that she who wrote it was "a fool possessed by the devil." This highly unchivalrous criticism did not, however, prevent a very famous man, then in Troyes, from coming to visit Jeanne. This was Brother Richard, a noted preacher of the Order of Friars Minor, who, we are told, was anxious to see what Jeanne "really could be!" He was brought into the French camp, outside the walls of Troyes, which had resolutely shut its gates upon the royal army, and led into Jeanne's presence. He evidently believed her to be a witch, for as he approached her he made the sign of the cross many times, and when he came near enough threw holy water over her as well as himself. Jeanne was very much amused. "Approach without fear," she cried to the astonished friar; "I shall not fly away!" Brother Richard would then have knelt at her feet, so strongly did he feel that as she was not of the devil she must be of God, but she would not allow this. They talked for a

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long time, and on his return the friar used all his eloquence to persuade the people of Troyes to open to the King, but they would not. So far from doing any good, he was put under arrest, and Jeanne's letter publicly burnt by the magistrates.

Five days the royal army lay before Troyes. Provisions ran short. The men were reduced to eating the unripe corn, and but for the bean-fields which lay around the town would have been very nearly starved.

More councils were held; and as usual, Charles was advised to retire. Troyes was a large, important town, strongly fortified, with a garrison of six hundred. It was held impossible to take it. At one of these councils a nobleman remarked that Jeanne's advice had not been asked, nor was she even present. At that moment, Dunois tells us: "Jeanne suddenly arrived and appeared in the Council. 'Noble Dauphin,' she said, 'order your people to come and besiege the town of Troyes, and lose no more time in such long councils. In God's Name, before

¹ P. 239.

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three days are gone, I will bring you into this town by favour or force, and greatly will the false Burgundy be astounded.' Then Jeanne, putting herself at the head of the army, had the tents placed right against the trenches of the town, and executed many marvellous manœuvres which had not been thought of by two or three accomplished generals working together. And so well did she work during the night that the next day the Bishop and citizens came all trembling and quaking to place their submission in the King's hands."

The inhabitants had been so terrified by the sight of the preparations for assault that they could hold out no longer. As Charles entered Troyes on July 10th, amidst public rejoicings, the garrison marched out by another gate. Five days after, Chalons sent in its submission. It was the next stage on the march. Charles proceeded there in state, and passed the night of July 15th within its walls. The town was no great distance from Domremy; and Jeanne had the joy of meeting there no less than five of her old friends, including Durand Laxart, and one of her

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godfathers, and of learning that at Rheims she would see her father, who had gone thither to meet her.

Two very touching little details in connection with this meeting have come down to us. They asked her, wondering at her, if she were not afraid when she went into battle? She answered sadly: "No"; she feared nothing but treachery. To Jean Morel, her godfather, she gave the old red dress she had worn when she left Domremy—and which she would never need again. It is pathetic to think she had kept it with her until now. She thought, perhaps, it would be useful for one of his children. The man accepted it reverently.

She bade them farewell bravely, and next day left Chalons with the Dauphin, riding at the head of her army on the last stage of the triumphal march to Rheims. They reached the "Royal City" soon after mid-day, and in the evening were solemnly received at the great gates by the Archbishop, Regnault de Chartres, who had entered the town early that morning.

Jeanne, mounted on a black charger, rode

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bareheaded in her shining armour by the Dauphin's side through the crowded streets at the head of the long procession, and shared his welcome. The city went mad with joy and loyalty; all night long the streets blazed with lights, the church-bells were ringing, and hasty preparations for the morrow went on till dawn.

The historic robes of state used for a coronation were unfortunately at the Abbey of St. Denis, in Paris, but others equally magnificent were prepared. Early next morning, July 17th, 1429, the sacred Ampulla used for the King's anointing was fetched in solemn procession from the magnificent Abbey-Church of St. Rémi, where it was always kept in custody of the Abbot. This prelate now carried it in state to the door of the Abbey, and delivered it to the escort of mounted noblemen who had solemnly sworn to bring it safely back after the coronation. These bore it, under a canopy, to the Cathedral, where, at the great west door, it was received by the Archbishop of Rheims, and carried in procession, ceremoniously to the High Altar; the escort

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entering the Cathedral on horseback, and proceeding thus as far as the choir.

At the hour of Terce the Cathedral was crowded, but a wide way was made through the sea of heads from the west door to the High Altar, and, as the murmur of the multitude outside swelled to a roar of welcome, those within took it up until the vaulted roof rang aloud. Then, in the sunshine, in the broad path between the close-serried masses of the people who were still crowding into Rheims, were seen splendid figures, their plumed hats and velvet cloaks glittering with jewels, mounted on gorgeously caparisoned horses, the loyal remnant of the peers of France, met to do homage to their King. And behind these, following the long procession of religious and secular clergy, seven or eight stately mitred figures in golden copes, twinkling with gems, the peers spiritual, the Archbishop and that handful of bishops who in all the realm of France had been found faithful to their sovereign.

And then—and the people sobbed and shouted—one in royal purple and ermine

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and cloth of gold, his dark head bare, his plain face—marked by suffering—strangely alight and confident; and beside him—and the cries rent the roof—a radiant slender figure in flashing silver armour, bareheaded and clear-eyed, bearing in her hand the white standard which, as she said, “as it had shared the pain, should also share the honour”; stained now, with its whiteness dimmed and smirched, and here and there a strange dark mark. And when the trumpets of the heralds died away, and the shouts ceased, as the glittering tide of colour surged up the steps of the High Altar, and the music of the Mass began, a dark, stern peasant, at the foot of a great column, watching with fierce, tear-blinded eyes the dazzling figure beside the King, who two years ago was his little daughter Jeannette, sank on his knees and sobbed aloud, while tears trickled through his knotted fingers, and fell on his rough frieze dress.

The Mass went on. The King was taking the Oath now, by which all Christian Kings were bound. The splendid promises of a Catholic sovereign were made to his people:

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“I, Charles, by the grace of God King of France, in the very instant of my crowning do promise, before God and to His Saints, that I will observe the canonical privilege, law, and justice to each and all of you prelates, and that I will defend you, God being my help, so far as I am able.

“I promise, in the name of Jesus Christ, to the Christian people subject to me, these things: first, that I will preserve them to the Church; next, that I will defend them from all rapine and iniquities; lastly, that I will do all in my power to drive from my country all those whom the Church declares heretic. And to all these things I take my oath.”

The peers turned towards the people, and another great shout split the air, while the Archbishop, his face working, poured the Holy Oil on the bowed head of the kneeling figure before him.

And then, for one supreme moment, as the crown which had been won back for France by the peasant's daughter hung poised over the King's head, glittering in the hands of the Archbishop, there fell a

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sudden tense, electric silence, as every faculty was concentrated into that of sight. And then the trumpets pealed forth again, and the people shouted until, says an old chronicler, it seemed as though the roof must surely fall. They shouted blessings on the King, they clamoured for the wondrous Maid. But up at the High Altar Jeanne was kneeling, her standard still in her hand, tears running down her cheeks, before the King, whom she had compelled to take his crown! "And all believed more firmly than before that what she had done had been wrought by God." The Maid of Orleans had now become indeed the Maid of France! It was the hour of her triumph, and she offered it to God again and again in a rapture of thanksgiving.

And still, at the foot of the distant column, the tears of that far-off kneeling figure fell thick and fast upon the marble floor!

PART III

RHEIMS TO ROUEN

JULY 17TH, 1429—MAY 30TH, 1431

I

COMPIÈGNE

THE Coronation at Rheims was, from a human standpoint, the climax of Jeanne's mission. When she stood by the King at his sacring, amidst the mad enthusiasm of the people, it might seem at first that the purpose of God in sending her had been accomplished, and that her historic work was done.

Her short career, however, was not to end in the blaze of transient glory at Rheims, but in the stifling smoke of the stake at Rouen. God had other designs for His servant, though as yet she knew them not. Besides the welfare of her country there was also to be considered the welfare of her own

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soul. And she, who could not have won her martyr's crown had she died at the moment of her great triumph, was to earn it, as with bleeding feet and broken heart she went down her way of sorrows, surely and certainly, day after day, into the Valley of the Shadow of Death.

From the very day of the Coronation Jeanne's story is one pitiful record of treachery, betrayal, and disaster. With very few noble exceptions, every one seems to have thought that the time had now come for her to fall into the background—to go home to her parents, to efface herself somehow. The other leaders were weary of hearing her praises perpetually sung, and of being taught how to fight by a girl of eighteen.

There is no longer any doubt as to the truth of the terrible fact that it was through the jealousy, or ingratitude, or apathy of those who owed most to her, that Jeanne was done to death. This must be continually remembered throughout the rest of her story.

Orleans was relieved, the King was crowned; the next thing was to bring back

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Paris to its allegiance. Charles agreed to accompany her thither with the army. All the towns on the line of march surrendered as they passed through: Soissons, Provins, and many others; but they were not important, and much time was lost in receiving their submission. Meantime the Duke of Bedford was able to pour reinforcements into the capital, though he carefully avoided meeting the French army on its way thither. It was not until the Eve of the Assumption, 1429, that the two armies came in sight of one another, at Senlis. On both sides now the campaign was, more or less, like a game of hide-and-seek. Neither party wanted to be the first to attack, and no decisive action had taken place since Patay, though there had been a great many skirmishes and much loss of life; therefore, when the French found the English encamped at Senlis they did their best to entice them from their defences. Jeanne even offered them time to arrange themselves in order of battle upon open ground; but Bedford steadily refused to attack, and the only fighting was a short, sharp skirmish, in which La Trémoille nearly

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lost his life, but was saved by Jeanne's prompt action.

On August 17th Compiègne surrendered to the King of France, and a day or two afterwards Beauvais, whose Bishop, Pierre Cauchon, the arch-enemy of Jeanne d'Arc, was a fierce Burgundian. He did his best to hold the town against the King, but the citizens insisted upon opening the gates, and when Charles entered in state Cauchon was obliged to withdraw, threatening deadly vengeance on the Maid.

It is scarcely possible to realize the inconceivable weakness and blindness of Charles VII at this crisis. Again and again, as we read the history of this unfortunate King, we are tempted to regret that the genius and enthusiasm of the Heaven-sent Maid should have been thrown away on any one so hopelessly incapable and invertebrate! While she was straining every nerve to reach Paris and enthrone the lawful King of France in his ancient capital, Charles was actually signing a treaty with the Duke of Burgundy to suspend hostilities until Christmas throughout all France north of the Seine!

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This was directly through the influence of the Archbishop of Rheims, who, as we have seen, believed that the whole question could be settled by diplomacy better than by fighting.

Jeanne, growing weary of the delay, knowing each day was precious, set off from Compiègne on August 23rd, with the Duke d'Alençon, at the head of an army of picked men, without waiting for Charles, and on the 26th entered and occupied St. Denis, outside Paris. After Rheims this was of all towns in France the most sacred in the eyes of Frenchmen, for the ancient Abbey was the burying-place of her kings.

The presence of Charles with the army was now imperatively necessary. Twice did Alençon go back and implore him to come; but, in spite of promises, it was not until September 7th that the King did arrive. The delay was exasperating, particularly to Jeanne. Though the next day was the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lady she decided to attack Paris at once. The assault was made by the French artillery at the barrier of St. Honoré early in the morning. About noon

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this was stormed, and the French swarmed across a wide dry trench only to be brought to a standstill by a second, broad, deep, and full of water. Even Jeanne was ignorant of the existence of this ditch, and for a few minutes the attacking party wavered. The Burgundians rained down stones and missiles of all sorts from the ramparts, and their sharp-shooters and archers did deadly work. Jeanne did not hesitate. Springing to the edge of the trench she tried the depth of the water with the staff of her standard, and cried loudly for fascines and faggots to be thrown into the ditch, in order to make a kind of bridge for the men to cross. Scarcely any one obeyed her order. The enemy showered insults upon her, and as she stood on the bank an arrow pierced her thigh. In spite of the pain, which was great, she stood there, calling in vain for help to fill up the ditch, her men falling all around her. "If only we can reach the walls," she cried again and again, "we should take the town! The loyal citizens in Paris would surely do something for us." And again, still more piteously, as evening

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drew on: "If only the King would show himself!"

This, however, was by no means the intention of Charles, who was secure at St. Denis. As night fell, and fifteen hundred dead and dying lay in the trampled mud and slime of the fatal ditch, the Duke d'Alençon literally forced her away. She resisted, begging him to make yet another effort to storm the ramparts. Weak as she was, her dauntless spirit could not yield. "If the King had but shown himself—if we had but gone on fighting—Paris would have been ours," she sobbed; and to comfort her the young Duke promised that the attack should be renewed, from the other side of the river, next morning. We are not, however, surprised to learn that early next day a message was received from Charles commanding Jeanne and Alençon to fall back, with the remainder of the army, on St. Denis. As the French troops withdrew in grief and shame Jeanne discovered that the bridge by which they had hoped to cross the Seine and attack the city from the opposite bank had been broken by the King's order. This

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incredible piece of ingratitude—to call it by no stronger name—must have been harder to bear than the loss of Paris. It is only another instance of the way in which Jeanne's most brilliant schemes were ruined by the King's weakness and La Trémoille's jealousy. The truce with Burgundy was now prolonged until Easter, 1430.

In the Abbey of St. Denis Jeanne laid her white armour as an *ex-voto*, upon the High Altar, in gratitude for her recovery from her wound. "It is the custom for soldiers to do it when they have been wounded," she explained: "I have been wounded. I offer my armour to St. Denis because his name is the battle-cry of France."

The story of the next nine months is one of inaction on the part of the King. Now that he was crowned he seemed to think further effort unnecessary. He went aimlessly from one town to another, keeping Jeanne still in his train, though she implored him to allow her to fight for him while she still "lasted." St. Denis had been retaken as soon as the royal army withdrew, and Jeanne's armour carried off in triumph by

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the English. The Duke d'Alençon, who was anxious to recover his estates in Normandy, begged for Jeanne's help, but Charles refused the request. She revisited Orleans, and, later on, Bourges, where the lady in whose house she lodged tells us a charming little story about her. "I remember," she says, "how women used to come to my house, bringing rosaries and other devotional objects for Jeanne to touch. The Maid would smile and say: 'Touch them yourselves; it will be just as good as if I did it!'" The devotion and affection of the people always cheered her; but she had a horror of being called, or taken for, a saint.

Towards the end of October, 1429, the King sent her to besiege the little town of St. Pierre-le-Moustier. She was unsuccessful, the French were repulsed, and Jeanne's faithful squire, d'Aulon, himself severely wounded, begged her to retire. Scarcely anyone was left beside her. "You are all alone," he cried. She took off her helmet, and, looking upward, spoke these words: "You think I am alone, but I have fifty thousand men-at-arms with me. I shall not

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go until the place is taken." "There were only five or six men near," says d'Aulon, simply. Hearing her cry, the troops rallied, and began hastily making a temporary bridge over the trenches, to reach the city walls, under Jeanne's direction, ¹ "which was immediately after done and prepared, at which the Deponent (d'Aulon) did much marvel, for immediately the town was taken by assault, without very great resistance." He adds further: "That all the deeds of the Maid seemed to him to be more divine and miraculous than otherwise, and that it was not possible for so young a Maid to do such things without the Will and Guidance of Our Lord."

The next town she attempted to take was La Charité-sur-Loire, and here she was unsuccessful; though a few months later the place surrendered to the King. It was at the close of this campaign that the King, as a reward for her services, conferred upon Jeanne (at Mehun-sur-Yèvre, December, 1429) that coat of arms which she never used herself, together with the surname Du Lis.

¹ P. 319.

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Her brothers and their descendants, however, appropriated both the blason and the name.

At Melun, which submitted in April, 1430, her Voices first revealed to Jeanne how, for her, the strange campaign was to end. She was to be taken prisoner before the Feast of St. John. Time and place were not revealed to her. She implored St. Catherine and St. Margaret to pray that she might not have a long imprisonment.

It is curious that a fresh wave of superstitious terror seemed, just at this time, to be passing over the English army. At the sight of the standard of the Maid many, it is said, declared on oath that they had strength neither to bend their bows nor strike a blow. So strong was this feeling that a great many English soldiers, when their time came to serve in France, failed to present themselves for duty; so that on May 3rd, 1430, a proclamation was issued, threatening with degradation and imprisonment such as were "afraid of the enchantments of the Maid." Meantime Jeanne, weeping, listening to the almost daily warn-

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ings of her Voices, knew that her hour was at hand.

The town of Compiègne was at that time, politically speaking, the key of the Kingdom of France. Charles, acting on La Trémoille's advice, would have surrendered it at the request of the Duke of Burgundy, if the inhabitants, under their governor, Guillaume Flavy, had not risen as one man and declined to open their gates to the enemy. The town was besieged by Burgundians and English, and Jeanne hastened to the rescue. She reached Compiègne on the morning of May 24th, 1430, approaching it through woods, on an unguarded side, and entered unnoticed with her men, before dawn.

She went at once to the great church of St. Jacques, where she heard Mass, received Holy Communion, and prayed long and earnestly. Then (as two who were then present witnessed nearly sixty years later), leaning against a pillar, she spoke to the little crowd assembled in the nave—men, women, and children—telling them that she would be betrayed and sold; that she would be taken prisoner, and delivered to death.

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Tears ran down her cheeks. "Pray for me," she entreated, "pray for me who shall soon no longer be able to serve the King of France or his kingdom." And all wept with her.

The same evening, the fatal 24th of May, she carried out an attack which she had planned that day with the governor of the town. Outside the walls lay a tract of flat marshy country, over which ran a raised road, leading to higher ground fortified by the enemy. About 5 o'clock Jeanne, with five hundred men, rode along this road to the fort of Margny. Flavy was to assist them with the heavy artillery from the walls of Compiègne. A sharp fight ensued, and three times the Burgundians were driven back; but suddenly the rearguard of Jeanne's army saw that some of the enemy were making a flank movement across the fields to cut off the retreat to the town. Terrified, they turned and fled, hotly pursued by the Burgundians; and in a few minutes the whole detachment was galloping back in the wildest confusion. Jeanne, in despair, calling upon them to stay and fight, was at

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last compelled herself to retreat by d'Aulon, who seized her horse's bridle.

The horrified watchers on the walls of Compiègne saw a confused stream of friends and enemies, pursuers and pursued, pouring towards the town in the gathering dusk. Dead and dying lay dark upon the dim road, behind the flying feet of the horses. The horror was deepened by the impossibility of knowing their own friends, and of using the artillery to protect them. The first-comers reached the drawbridge and streamed under the portcullis. Hard behind followed the enemy, reckless in pursuit.

Terror got the upper hand—terror lest the Burgundians should enter and overpower the garrison. Guillaume Flavy gave the order to raise the bridge. It was done, just as the enemy reached it, and reining their horses, furious, on the very edge of the moat, found they were not the only people shut out of the town. Behind them, breathless, a knot of desperate men closed round a white standard; and in their midst, erect and fearless in that supreme moment—one moment too late—was the Maid of France!

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One can scarcely bear to think of the piteous scene that followed. There was a yell of triumph, a rush, a scuffle, and Jeanne, her standard torn from her hand, was dragged from her saddle by a rough Burgundian archer; her defenders struck down or taken prisoner. "'Tis the Maid! 'Tis the Maid!" they shouted. "Yield, yield; pledge us your word." "I have pledged it to another," cried the dauntless girl, "and I will keep my oath." A crowd of enemies surrounded her, and though her priceless value as a captive kept her from actual blows and injury, taunts and insults of every description were heaped upon the "witch," and she was roughly handled. Her friends, among whom were her brother Pierre, Xaintrilles, and d'Aulon himself, could only look on in helpless fury as she was led away a prisoner to the quarters of John of Luxemburg, one of whose men had been her actual captor.

The blow she had so long dreaded had fallen, but the suspense was over. And as she lay that night on her rough straw bed, bound hand and foot in the tent guarded

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without by noisy, jeering soldiers; helpless, betrayed, forsaken; there came to her, we cannot doubt, those familiar Heavenly Presences, St. Catherine the Martyr, St. Margaret, perhaps even "Messire St. Michel" himself, filling her first prison with the soft splendour of a Light Invisible, and Jeanne was comforted.

II

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AFTER a few days' captivity outside the walls of Compiègne (which was in the diocese of Beauvais, and therefore within the jurisdiction of Cauchon, the traitor-bishop), Jeanne was taken, by order of Jean de Luxembourg, to his castle of Beaulieu, a few leagues distant, where she was kept for two months. She was not hardly treated, but her anxiety about the fate of Compiègne was intense. Towards the end of July she made an attempt to escape, and go to its rescue, which was very nearly successful. After this she was removed to Beaurevoir, a more distant fortress, buried in deep woods, where the wife and aunt of her captor received her graciously. The courtesy and consideration shown by these ladies to Jeanne greatly lightened her captivity, but in spite of all their kindly sympathy—for at heart they were loyal Frenchwomen—she was perpetually fretting

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to go to the rescue of Compiègne, and made another desperate effort to escape. Imprisoned in a lofty tower she dropped from a window sixty feet above ground, and was picked up for dead. By what seemed a miracle she was unhurt, except for severe bruises, but for three days she lay in a high fever, brought on doubtless by the shock and pain. This attempt is the only fault which can be laid to Jeanne's charge throughout her whole career. Her Voices, she confessed at her trial, had warned her not to try to escape; that Compiègne would be saved; and that she must yield to the will of God; but that having heard one day that the town was on the point of being taken, and all the inhabitants massacred, she had dared the leap. She had repented bitterly, she added, confessing her fault, and had received absolution. St. Catherine, too, had forgiven her. The idea of suicide, suggested by her judges, was absolutely groundless. "I did not want to kill myself," she said, "I wanted to get back to my friends."

Compiègne was eventually relieved on October 26th, 1430. Jeanne was still at



Jeanne d'Arc in Prison.

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Beaurevoir, where her gentle hostesses begged her more than once to put on a woman's dress again, but she always answered, "the time is not yet come." In November the negotiations for her purchase by the English being completed, she was taken to Arras, and thence to the ancient castle of Crotoy, where she was allowed to approach the Sacraments, and hear Mass. Here she was finally handed over to the English. Pierre Cauchon, Bishop of Beauvais, had acted as intermediary between the Duke of Bedford and her Burgundian captor. The English were absolutely determined to get the Maid into their power. Cauchon was authorized to offer an enormous sum, amounting to nearly £23,000 of our money, as the price of the "witch"; and he had begun to treat for her with his Burgundian allies outside the walls of Compiègne in July. It was the fate above all others which Jeanne dreaded. The money was finally paid down on November 21st, and Jeanne was brought from Crotoy, by way of Dieppe, to Rouen, reaching that town on December 23rd, 1430.

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Here she was kept in a prison from which there were indeed no means of escape. In the Castle of Rouen an iron cage had been prepared, in which the Maid was kept chained upright to the bars, by hands, feet, and neck, like a dangerous wild beast, "in spite of her weakness," as a pitying onlooker tells us. The cell in which the cage was placed was in a tower, approached by a flight of seven or eight stone steps. The prisoner was guarded day and night by five English soldiers of the lowest class, two of whom always sat in the room, so that she was never alone for an instant, and could never escape from their coarse jests and horrible language. So she passed her nineteenth Christmas!

One thing is absolutely certain, and can be proved by the official letters-patent written in the name of Henry VI, King of England (then a child of nine), dated from Rouen January 3rd, 1431—the English never meant to let Jeanne go at all, whether she were declared "innocent" or not. They meant her to be condemned, and thus point the fact that Charles VII owed his throne to an

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adventuress and a witch. The judges were, in fact, warned that any show of mercy on their part would be useless. Her death was a foregone conclusion.

Her personal as well as her political enemies found the accusation of witchcraft a most convenient excuse for abandoning Jeanne to her fate. Not one of those for whom she had dared and lost her life raised a hand, or spoke a word to save her. The King gave no sign—Dunois and Alençon, who had at least been able to appreciate her, where were they? She must have asked herself these questions many times. They have never been answered yet. Regnault de Chartres, in a pastoral letter to his flock, bids them not to sorrow overmuch for the capture of the Maid, for she was now rewarded according to her deserts, and punished for the grievous sin of pride. She had ever, said the Archbishop, followed her own inclinations, and listened to no one else.

The forlorn young prisoner secured, loaded with chains, and suffering indescribably in mind and body, it now only remained to

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arrange a trial by which justice could be sufficiently caricatured to bring about her condemnation, and pass sentence of death. Cauchon, the master-spirit of these proceedings, set briskly to work. As Jeanne was to die, any charge would answer the purpose if properly managed; but to treat her as a witch, and accuse her of consultation with evil spirits would bring her directly under ecclesiastical jurisdiction, which was what Cauchon desired. Besides, it was almost impossible to refute such a charge. Nothing could be better. Letters-patent being, at his request, granted to him in the name of the Council of the King of England, he next demanded from the Cathedral Chapter spiritual jurisdiction in the Archdiocese of Rouen¹ to preside over the process against the Maid. Full powers being granted to him, on December 28th, 1430, "as if he were in his own diocese of Beauvais"; his next step was to organize the tribunal.

On January 9th, 1431, he nominated a

¹ The See of Rouen was vacant. Cauchon was in great hopes of securing the preferment.

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number of learned doctors and ecclesiastics, "on whom," we are significantly told, "he could count"; and the various officials of a properly-constituted ecclesiastical court. The Promoter, who had much the same office as the Public Prosecutor in an ordinary criminal case, was Jean d'Estivet, Vicar-General of Beauvais, an utterly unscrupulous tool of Cauchon, and a man absolutely without compassion. His brutal treatment of Jeanne throughout the trial moved even her enemies to anger. "He died miserably," says one who knew him:¹ "he was found dead in a drain outside the gates of Rouen." There were two notaries, Manchon and Boisguillaume, whose duty it was to take down verbatim the judge's questions and the prisoner's answers. Both were honest, straightforward priests of Rouen, of whom Manchon in particular was deeply touched by Jeanne's misfortunes. Another priest, Jean Massieu, was appointed usher. He had to conduct the prisoner to and from her cell, and see that she spoke to no one on the way. To Jean Delafontaine, a distinguished ec-

¹ P. 299.

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clesiastic, was given the office of commissioner, and examiner of witnesses.

This last appointment was probably ironical, as there were no witnesses to examine. Six eminent doctors from the University of Paris, all of whom were deeply prejudiced against Jeanne, sat in the tribunal. It was one of these, Thomas de Courcelles, who later on advised that the prisoner should be put to the torture.¹ He was an austere young priest, whose personal holiness was unquestionable, and he had been Rector of the University. Only one of the assessors was an Englishman, but the whole Burgundian tribunal was English to a man in spirit and political interest. Altogether there were one hundred and twenty assessors, of whom about fifty sat daily, but not one was present on each occasion. Amongst them were several Dominican friars, and it is interesting to notice that these were the only ones who in any way showed kindness to Jeanne. Two, as we shall see, were actually threatened with death for daring to give her advice; and in

¹ Courcelles, however, denied this. "I never gave an opinion as to her being put to the torture." (P. 257.)

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the last awful scene of her life it was a Dominican priest who stood beside her in his white robes, barefooted on the faggots in the smothering smoke, holding the crucifix before her dying eyes, until the martyr herself begged him to draw back for fear of the fire.

As the trial was—nominally—for an ecclesiastical offence the Vice-Inquisitor, Fr. Jean Lemaître, O.P., was invited to join Cauchon as president of the Commission. He excused himself, saying that his jurisdiction did not extend to Beauvais! Cauchon, not to be outdone, and secretly furious, referred the matter to the Grand Inquisitor for France, and Lemaître was ordered to become co-president, Cauchon privately informing him that if he still refused it would be at the peril of his life. He took, however, scarcely any part in the trial, though his presence made it possible for Cauchon to style the other assessors: "Consultors of the Holy Office." One more member of the tribunal must be mentioned: Nicholas Loyseleur, a canon of Rouen, who played, if possible, a part even more base than that of the Bishop of Beauvais.

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The tribunal being organized, the next step was to frame the charge, which was conveniently vague, but as even so there was absolutely no evidence of any kind to support it Cauchon sent messengers to Domremy. Much, no doubt, might be discovered there!

The evidence thus collected was laid before a committee of the Council on January 13th, but it was so favourable to the prisoner that it was promptly suppressed. The messenger came ¹ "to the Bishop of Beauvais, expecting to have satisfaction for his labour and expense. But the Bishop blamed him for a traitor and a bad man, and said he had not done in this as he had been told; . . . he could not get any wage from the Bishop, who found his information of no use: . . . he had learnt nothing of Jeanne which he would not willingly know of his own sister, although he had made inquiries in five or six parishes near Domremy as well as in the village itself." "Of *no use*" is delightfully significant.

A month later, after much preparatory

¹ P. 303.

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shuffling, Cauchon declared that there was "sufficient matter to proceed against the Maid as touching the Faith"; and Jeanne was cited to appear before the tribunal on Wednesday, February 21st. The "information" on which the citation was based was likewise carefully suppressed.

All the officials, and many of those concerned in the trial who were alive twenty years later gave evidence on oath (in the earlier Inquiries for the Rehabilitation) as to the way in which the Process was conducted. The chief notary, Manchon, thus solemnly deposes:¹ "I acted as notary in the Process, by compulsion of the Great Council of the King of England, not daring to contradict their order. The Bishop of Beauvais was not compelled to take up the Process against Jeanne. He did it of free-will. The Inquisitor was summoned and dared not refuse. The Process was carried out by the English at their expense. The Promoter also was not compelled, but came of free-will. The Assessors and Doctors were summoned and dared not refuse . . .

¹ P. 179.

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Jeanne answered prudently and with simplicity . . . She could not have defended herself against such great Doctors had she not been inspired. The examination lasted for two or three hours in the morning, and sometimes as long again in the afternoon of the same day. She was much fatigued by the examination, for the examiners put to her the most subtle questions they possibly could. . . . I as notary wrote Jeanne's answers and defence. Two or three writers, who were secretly ensconced near, omitted, in their writing, all that was in her favour. The judges desired me also to write in such wise, but I refused." Another assessor tells us that the English were discontented with Manchon, considering him too favourable to Jeanne. But, as the Benedictine Prior of St. Michael-at-Rouen says pathetically:¹ "If the English had had such a woman they would have honoured her much, and not have treated her in this manner."

As Jeanne was to be tried by the Church she ought to have been kept in an ecclesiastical prison. This was not done. Until

¹ P. 211.

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her death she was kept in that horrible cell exposed to the insults of her rough English guards.

She was not allowed an advocate. Massieu, the usher, tells us:¹ "At the beginning of the Process, Jeanne asked for Counsel in her replies, she said she was too unlearned to reply; but they answered that she must speak for herself as best she could, for she should not have counsel."

On February 20th the same witness tells us he went to Jeanne's cell to summon her before her judges at eight o'clock next morning, in the Chapel Royal of Rouen Castle. She replied meekly, and begged two things: that amongst her judges there should be as many French as English and Burgundians; and that she might be allowed to hear Mass before being put on her trial. To the first request no answer was returned, but Cauchon sent a message to say that on account of her "abominable crimes," and her obstinacy in wearing a man's dress, it was impossible she should be allowed to hear Mass.

¹ P. 204.

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Next morning, February 21st, 1431, the trial began. For nearly two months this girl of nineteen had been shut up like a wild beast in a cage, friendless, suffering the utmost horrors of captivity, deprived of solitude—deprived above all of the Sacraments, and she now stood defenceless before the men who intended her to die. She was still suffering from the effects of the fall at Beaurevoir, but in spite of bodily weakness and weariness her spirit was yet unbroken.

Cauchon began by reading the charge, stating that Jeanne had been guilty of many acts contrary to the Catholic Faith, the report of which had spread “throughout Christendom,” and that she had been given up by the King of England to that tribunal in order that she might be proceeded against “in the matter of the Faith.”

¹ “Then,” continued the bishop, whose own orthodoxy was more than doubtful, “desiring in this particular the blessed succour of Jesus Christ, Who is concerned in this, and working only to fulfil the duties of our office

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for the exaltation and preservation of the Catholic Faith, we did first charitably warn the said Jeanne . . . to speak the whole truth upon all questions which should be addressed to her touching the Faith; and we did exhort her to avoid all subterfuges and shufflings of such a nature as should turn her aside from a sincere and true avowal."

Jeanne was next required to swear to speak the truth, and answered that perhaps she might be asked questions she "ought not" to answer. (This referred to questions as to her Voices, and the sign she had given the King, which she never revealed.) This being overruled she was sworn to speak the truth on matters of faith, and on what she knew. This first Public Examination principally concerned her home and early life. "Say your Pater," said Cauchon suddenly. But she refused. "I will not say it, unless you will hear me in confession," she answered. This the Bishop declined to do, probably lest he should thus hear information which he would be unable to use against Jeanne. She would not promise not to try to escape.

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In the two following examinations Jeanne was closely questioned as to her doings at Vaucouleurs and Chinon. On Saturday, February 24th, and the following Tuesday, she was further questioned as to her Voices. They elicited first that Jeanne was fasting strictly this Lent; secondly that her Voices visited her in prison continually; thirdly that she was far more afraid of saying what might offend them than of answering her judges. The dignitary who questioned her declared later, on oath, that he had no doubt she was a witch!

She gave many details as to the appearance of her Voices; they had hands, faces, wings, crowns. "Have they hair?" inquired her questioner.¹ "It is well to know they have," responded Jeanne demurely. They asked her if St. Michael wore clothes. "Do you think God has not wherewithal to clothe him?" she inquired.

Though hard pressed she repeated again and again that she had done nothing but by the commandment of God. "I would rather," she said to Beaupère,² "have been

¹ P. 39.

² P. 26.

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torn asunder by four horses than have come into France without God's leave."

At the fifth Public Examination, on March 1st, Cauchon tried to confuse her by crafty questions as to who was the true Pope.¹ The question had puzzled the wisest heads in Christendom. Jeanne disposed of it with the simplicity of a little child. "Whom do you believe to be the true Pope?" asked the bishop. "Are there two of them?" retorted the prisoner. The questions and answers in the original are of thrilling interest. They tormented her as to the sign she had given to the King. She replied that they should not drag it from her lips. They tried unsuccessfully to prove that she had caused superstitious honour to be paid to her banner, her sword, her garments. She discomfited them by speaking the simple truth. To a question of Cauchon's she replied with dignity: "It is not my habit to swear."

¹ The great schism of the West was then drawing to its close. France, Scotland, and Spain, as a whole, had believed in the anti-pope, Clement VII, who was a Frenchman. England, the Empire, and Italy had declared for the true pope, Martin V, the successor of Gregory XII.

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The last of these six Public Examinations was held on Saturday, March 3rd, before forty-one assessors. It was evident that popular opinion was setting decidedly in Jeanne's favour. Nothing had been proved against her; no twisting of her words could make them mean what her judges wished. Cauchon determined on a new plan. Henceforth the examinations, instead of being in open court, should take place in the prison, before a few judges chosen from those most hostile to Jeanne. No one could then help her even by a look or sign. This had been attempted by a Dominican friar, Ysambard de la Pierre. ¹“On one occasion, I, with many others, admonished and besought Jeanne to submit to the Church. To which she replied that she would willingly submit to the Holy Father, requesting to be taken before him, and to be no more submitted to the judgement of her enemies. And when, at this time, I counselled her to submit to the Council of Bâle,² Jeanne asked what a

¹ P. 159.

² Convened by Pope Eugenius IV, the successor of Martin V, to meet on March 1st, 1431.

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general Council was. I answered her, that it was an assembly of the whole Church Universal, and of Christendom, and that in this Council there were some of her side as well as of the English side. Having heard and understood this, she began to cry: 'Oh! if in that place there are any of our side, I am quite willing to give myself up and to submit to the Council of Bâle.' And immediately, in great rage and indignation, the Bishop of Beauvais began to call out: 'Hold your tongue, in the devil's name!' and told the Notary he was to be careful to make no note of the submission she had made to the General Council of Bâle. On account of these things and many others, the English and their officers threatened me terribly, so that, had I not kept silence, they would have thrown me into the Seine." Another Dominican confirms this account¹: "I was present at one session with Brother Ysambard de la Pierre; and, although we could find no room for ourselves in the consistory, we seated ourselves at the middle of the table, near to Jeanne. When she was questioned or

¹ P. 164.

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examined, the said Brother Ysambard advised her as to what she should say, nudging her, or making some other sign. After the session was over, I and Brother Ysambard . . . were deputed to visit her in prison the same day after dinner and give her counsel; we went together to the Castle . . . and there we found the Earl of Warwick, who attacked the said Brother Ysambard with great anger and indignation, biting insults, and harsh epithets, saying to him: 'Why didst thou touch that wicked person this morning, making so many signs? Mort Bleu! villain! if I see thee again taking trouble to deliver her, and to advise her for her good I will have thee thrown into the Seine.' At which," says the friar, with great simplicity, "I and the other companion of the said Ysambard fled for fear into the convent."

Nor was Father Ysambard the only priest threatened. Massieu, the usher, tells a sad story. He gives¹ as his reasons for believing that the "proceedings were taken out of hatred, and in order to abase the honour of

¹ P. 171.

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the King of France whom she served, and to wreak vengeance and bring her to death, not . . . for the honour of God and of the Catholic Faith," several instances of cruelty to Jeanne, of which this is one: ¹"As I was leading Jeanne many times from her prison to the Court, and passed before the Chapel of the Castle, at Jeanne's request, I suffered her to make her devotions in passing; and I was often reproved by . . . the Promoter, who said to me: 'Traitor! what makes thee so bold as to permit this Excommunicate to approach without permission? I will have thee put in a tower where thou shalt see neither sun nor moon for a month, if thou dost so again.' And when the Promoter saw that I did not obey him [he] placed himself many times before the door of the Chapel, between me and Jeanne, to prevent her saying her prayers before the Chapel, and asked expressly of Jeanne: 'Is this the Body of Christ?' When I was taking her back to prison the fourth or fifth day, a priest . . . asked me: 'What dost thou think of her answers? Will she be burnt?'

¹ P. 171-2.

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What will happen?" Massieu replied, that up till now he had seen in her only good and honour, and that God only knew what would happen in the end. "On this account I was summoned, in the afternoon, by the Lord of Beauvais, the Judge, and was spoken to of these things, and told to be careful to make no mistake, or I should be made to drink more than was good for me. I think that, unless the Notary Manchon had made excuses for me, I should not have escaped."

But this was not the worst. One of her judges, Nicholas Loyseleur, a "familiar" of Cauchon, who was heart and soul on the English side, was not ashamed to plan to play the part of Judas. "It was agreed," says Manchon,¹ "that Maître Nicholas Loyseleur should pretend to be from the Marches of Lorraine—Jeanne's own country—and in the following of the King of France; that he should enter her prison in a layman's habit, and that the guards should retire and leave him alone with her. There was, in a room adjoining the prison, a hole, specially made for the purpose, in order that I and

¹ P. 183.

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my companion might be there and hear what was said by Jeanne. Thither we went, unseen by her. Then Loyseleur, pretending to have news, began to question Jeanne . . . of her revelations. Jeanne replied, believing him to be in fact of her own country and party." Manchon declined to write down evidence thus procured, though Cauchon and Warwick insisted. "And ever afterwards Jeanne had great confidence in this Loyseleur."

This almost incredible evidence is confirmed by several witnesses. Such facts must speak for themselves.

It would be inconceivable were it not vouched for by many besides the Notaries themselves, that Cauchon wished to falsify the reports of the prisoner's answers. Manchon says: ¹ "At the beginning of the Trial . . . the Judges several times wished to compel me . . . to put [Jeanne's answers and excuses] in other terms, by changing the sense of her words, or in other ways. . . . By command of the Bishop . . . two men were placed . . . so that they could

¹ P. 167.

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not be seen. [They] wrote and reported what there was in the charge against Jeanne, keeping silence as to her excuses; and, in my opinion," concludes the notary firmly, "this was Loyseleur."

The same witness, whose evidence is perhaps the most valuable of all, relates a most interesting fact:¹ "When the trial had begun, Maître Jean Lohier, a grave Norman clerk, came to this Town of Rouen and communication was made to him of what the Bishop of Beauvais had written hereon, and the said Lohier asked for two or three days' delay to look into it. To which he received answer that he should give his opinion that afternoon; and this he was obliged to do. And . . . when he had seen the Process, [he] said it was of no value, for several reasons." These, given at length, are in substance: that the Process was not in ordinary form; nor held in open court; that no one representing the King of France had been called; that no legal proofs of any charge were forthcoming; and that Jeanne was undefended by counsel. "At which my

¹ Pp. 165-7.

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Lord of Beauvais was very indignant against the said Lohier; and although [the Bishop] told him that he might remain to see the carrying out of the trial, Lohier replied that he would not do so. And immediately my Lord of Beauvais . . . came to the masters . . . and said to them: 'This Lohier wants to put fine questions into our Process: he would find fault with everything, and says it is of no value. If we were to believe him, everything must be begun again, and all we have done would be worth nothing!' And . . . my Lord . . . added: 'It is clear enough now on which foot he limps. By Saint John! we will do nothing in the matter, but will go on with our Process as it is begun!' The next morning," says Manchon, "I spoke with the said Lohier, . . . and asked him what he thought of the said Trial, and of Jeanne. He replied: 'You see the way they are proceeding. They will take her, if they can, in her words—as in assertions where she says, "*I know for certain*," as regards the apparitions; but if she said "*I think*," instead . . . it is my opinion no man could condemn her. It seems they act

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rather from hate than otherwise; and for that reason I will not stay here, for I have no desire to be in it.' And in truth," concludes Manchon, "he thenceforward lived always at the Court of Rome."

The nine Private Examinations which followed were made in the prison, from Saturday, March 10th to the 17th. It was not until the fourth examination on Tuesday, 13th, that the Vice-Inquisitor sat as judge. The old ground was gone over again. She was questioned closely about the angels. She said the Angel who appeared to her had never failed her. ¹"Has not the Angel, then, failed you," sneered Delafontaine, "with regard to the things of this life, in that you have been taken prisoner?" "I think, as it has pleased Our Lord, that it is for my well-being that I was taken prisoner," replied the peasant girl. "Has your Angel never failed you in the good things of grace?" asked another. "How can he fail me when he comforts me every day?" Nothing could shake her magnificent faith.

The question of man's dress—upon which,

¹ P. 62.

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in the end, her life depended—again came up. She never wavered in her answers. Cauchon asked her why she, rather than another, was chosen to deliver France. ¹“It has pleased God so to do by a simple maiden,” she answered, with gentle dignity. On Wednesday, 14th,² Delafontaine said to her:³ “You said that my Lord of Beauvais put himself in great danger by bringing you to trial; of what danger were you speaking?” “You say that you are my judge; I do not know if you are, but take heed not to judge wrongly, because you would put yourself in great danger.” . . . “But what is this . . . danger?” persisted Delafontaine. Then she replied magnificently: “St. Catherine has told me that I shall have help; I do not know if this will be to be delivered from prison, or if, whilst I am being tried, some disturbance may happen by which I shall be delivered. The help will come to me, I think,

¹ P. 72.

² On this day the true Pope, St. Eugenius IV, was crowned in Rome. He succeeded Martin V by an undisputed election.

³ P. 76.

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in one way or the other. Besides this, my Voices have told me that I shall be delivered by a great victory; and they add: 'Be resigned; have no care for thy martyrdom; thou wilt come in the end to the Kingdom of Paradise.' They have told me this, simply, absolutely, and without fail. What is meant by my martyrdom is the pain and adversity that I suffer in prison; I do not know if I shall have still greater suffering to bear; for that I refer me to God."

As yet she knew not. "In all things I wait on Our Lord," she ended.

Next day she was in real danger. Finding it impossible to entrap her in any other way, and relying on her ignorance of all theological language, Cauchon directed that she should be questioned on submission to the Church. She begged that her answers might be examined by the clergy, and that she might be told if there was anything in them contrary to the Catholic faith. Cauchon pressed for a more direct answer. ¹ "What is the Church?" she inquired. "So far as it is you I will not submit to your judge-

¹ P. 189.

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ment, because you are my deadly enemy." The difference between the Church Militant and the Church Triumphant was explained to her at length. ¹"You ask me of the Church Triumphant and Militant," she answered. "I do not understand these terms; but I am willing to submit to the Church as a good Christian should." When it was explained to her that the submission was, not to the Bishop, but to the Pope, as Head of the Catholic Church, alone the supreme judge of error, she understood better. ²"The day after she had been thus advised she said that she wished certainly to submit to our Holy Father the Pope and to the Holy Council.³ When my Lord of Beauvais heard this, he asked who had spoken with the Maid." He was told that it was Delafontaine and the two Dominicans. In their absence he turned furiously upon Lemaître, the Dominican Vice-Inquisitor, and threatened to do him an injury. Delafontaine left Rouen, and did not return. "And as for the Friars, they would have been in peril of death, but for the said Lemaître,

¹ P. 203.

² P. 168.

³ Of Bale.

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who excused them and besought for them, saying that if any harm were done to them he would never again come to the Trial."

It was evident now that nothing but the direct intervention of the Holy Father—who did not know that the trial was taking place—could save the Maid.

At the last two examinations on March 17th the question of submission was again brought up. It was very difficult to make Jeanne see that to say: "I submit to God" was not—in one sense—the same thing as to say: "I submit to the Church." On this ignorance Cauchon relied. To her it was all one. Catholic in every fibre of her being, she utterly failed to understand at first that every heretic claimed to submit only "to God"; and that the very test of Catholicity was the acceptance of the Infallible Authority of the Catholic Church. But when they asked her if she would answer before the Holy Father: "Let me be taken before him!" she cried. It was the appeal to Caesar, but it was unheeded.

The private examinations being now con-

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cluded, a sort of digest of the whole series was drawn up, embodied in Seventy Articles, containing the wildest and vaguest statements about Jeanne. Each article was read aloud, that the prisoner might reply to it. Their whole tenor may be gathered from part of Article XXXVIII:¹ "Jeanne, from the time of her childhood, hath said, done, and committed a great number of crimes, sins, and evil deeds—shameful, cruel, scandalous, dishonouring, unworthy of her sex." The seventy were subsequently reduced to twelve by Nicholas Midi. Jeanne was represented as a devil-worshipper, a traitress, a coward to the point of despair and suicide, an idolater, a blasphemer of God and the saints, a schismatic, and an apostate. (How she could be all these things at once was not stated.) The majority of the assessors accepted them; the few who differed said they were true, *unless*—Jeanne's revelations came from God. The Bishop of Avranches spoke plainly. "In what Jeanne affirms," said he, "there is nothing which can be rejected as impossible." For this testimony

¹ P. 354.

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he was shortly after thrown into prison, as a partisan of France.

At this point Jeanne fell ill, and for a few days her life was in danger. Her malady was a kind of gaol-fever, brought about by the unspeakable physical and moral torments of the past weeks; but she was not allowed to die. A doctor was sent to attend her, and she recovered.¹ When she was getting better, d'Estivet, the Promoter, came to see her, and abused her in such unmeasured language that the poor girl had a serious relapse, and again her life was in danger. She had been out of the cage since the trial began, and was now kept chained to a wooden plank-bed, so that she could move neither hands nor feet. On April 18th Cauchon came to see her. She begged him to allow her to confess, and make her Easter Communion. He forbade her, saying falsely that she had refused to submit to the Church.

¹ "The King [of England] would not, for anything, that she should die a natural death; he had bought her too dear for that, and he intended that she should die at the hands of justice, and be burnt."
—*Evidence of the physician who attended Jeanne.*
P. 254.

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A doctor who accompanied him informed Jeanne that unless she submitted she would be "abandoned like a Saracen." She could not submit more fully than she had done.

On May 2nd another plan was tried. After a charge had been read by the Archdeacon of Evreux, and she had again appealed in vain to be taken to the Pope, they tried once more to get her to deny the truth of her revelations. As she would not, the Archdeacon warned her she was exposing herself to the danger of eternal fire for her soul, and temporal fire for her body. She asked if they would give her time to consider. She was told she must answer there and then. As she did not, she was led back to prison.

On May 9th Cauchon hit on an even more efficacious plan to extort a confession. Jeanne, pale and wasted from her recent illness, scarred with the marks of the heavy chains, was brought into the Great Tower at Rouen Castle before Cauchon and nine assessors. That dignitary remarked that as they had failed to make her speak the truth by gentleness they must now employ force.

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She would be put to the torture. They showed her the executioner and his hideous implements. "You may tear my limbs off; I can say nothing else," she replied.

Perhaps her utter loneliness touched what spark of manliness remained in some of her judges, for when the time came only three voted that she should be tortured, one of whom was the Judas-priest, Loyseleur. One doctor observed that there was matter enough to condemn, without tormenting her. Probably her marvellous courage was never greater than when, threatened with torture because she persisted that her Voices were from God, she told her judges, simply, that St. Gabriel himself now came to comfort her. He appeared first on the Feast of the Finding of the Holy Cross.¹ They seem to have given up in despair, and she was led back to the plank-bed to which she was padlocked.

On May 14th the judgement of the University of Paris upon the whole case was laid before Cauchon. It agreed with the Twelve Articles; added a few titles, such as

¹ May 3rd, 1431.



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Liar and Enchantress, to those which Jeanne already bore; and recommended that she should be handed over to the secular arm to receive the punishment of her crimes. This meant death by fire.

On May 23rd this judgement was read to Jeanne by the Bishop, who then besought her "by the Pity which she had for the Passion of her Creator" to save her soul—by denying her mission. If she refused, that soul, he feared, must suffer eternal damnation, and her body be burnt in the fire. To this Jeanne answered, with rapt face and streaming eyes, that if she were already at the stake and the executioner lighting the faggots she could say no more, nor deny the Truth of God.

It was the end. There was no more to be said—even by Cauchon. The next day was appointed for her sentence.

In the cemetery behind the glorious Church of St. Ouen, two platforms were erected. On one sat Cardinal Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, great-uncle of the King of England, the Bishops of Beauvais, Norwich, and two others, with the Vice-

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Inquisitor. On the other was the forlorn figure of the prisoner, with the usher, the two notaries, Loyseleur, and a distinguished ecclesiastic, Maître Erard, of the Paris University, who was to preach what was intended for her funeral sermon. A vast crowd surged below.

The priest gave out his text: "The branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the Vine."

Jeanne, he said, was a monster such as had never before appeared in France, but even worse than she was the King, who had not scrupled to make use of her to recover his throne. ¹"Charles," he cried, 'who calls himself King and Governor [of France] hath joined himself, as a heretic and schismatic, which he is, to the words and deeds of a worthless woman, defamed, and full of dishonour.' . . . Two or three times he repeated these words about the King, and, at last, addressing himself to Jeanne, he said, raising his finger: 'It is to thee, Jeanne, that I speak, I tell thee that thy King is a heretic and schismatic!'

¹ P. 172.

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To which she replied: 'By my faith, sir, saving your reverence, I dare say and swear, on pain of death, that he is the most noble of all Christians, and the one who most loves the faith of the Church, and he is not what you say.' And then the preacher said (to Massieu): 'Make her keep silence.'"

Thus her great generous soul defended the unnatural weakling who had abandoned her to her fate. Towards the end Erard again demanded her submission to the Church, by which he meant, to the opinion of her judges. To the astonishment of everyone she answered clearly, "I have begged that all my deeds and words may be set before Our Lord the Pope, to whom, after God, I appeal." This would never do! Cauchon leapt to his feet. "Do you revoke what your judges said was false?"¹ "I refer to God, and our Holy Father the Pope." "We cannot go to the Pope now," cried Cauchon impatiently. "I am your judge, as Bishop. Will you believe what your judges tell you?" To which she replied,

¹ That she had been sent by God, and had seen visions of Angels and Saints.

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simply, despairingly, "I cannot." From this it was found impossible to move her, though thrice she uttered her appeal to the Pope.

Then Cauchon began, very slowly, to read the death sentence, in a sudden quivering silence.

This was Loyseleur's opportunity. "Why not save your life," he whispered, "by putting on a woman's dress?" (This of course would imply that she had been wrong in dressing like a man, for which she declared she had God's command.)

Her hands clasped the rough rail before her convulsively. The crowd cried aloud to her: "Save your life, Jeanne! save your life!" She looked out over their heads, wide-eyed, unseeing. . . . Loyseleur described the horrors,—the cruel agony of the death which she could avoid by so small,—so meaningless a thing as putting on a woman's dress, and by signing her name to a paper. It was a mere matter of form . . . just to say she had been mistaken in what she had believed . . . nothing more!

Erard stood by, the paper rustling in his

hand; a fussy secretary bustled up from below with pen and ink. If she signed it she would be certainly set free. . . . It was just a question of submission . . . and she wished to submit, did she not . . . like a good child? Thus Loyseleur; while the Bishop's great voice boomed slowly on: "*Cast out from the Unity of the Church, abandoned to the Secular Power, as indeed we do abandon thee.*" . . . What did it mean? Was there really no deliverance from this horrible thing? . . . St. Michael had promised. . . .

Her eyes fell on a cart at the foot of the scaffold, . . . waiting for some one . . . a tall man standing in it, dressed in black, masked, terrible, . . . waiting for her! . . . She understood now! Death! not deliverance. A horrible, agonizing death. Her spirit broke under the shock. "Yes, yes, I submit," she gasped; "I submit to the Church."

A confused roar broke from the crowd, the booming voice stopped. Erard hurried forward with his paper. A pen was put into her trembling hand. She made a circle

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with it, her tears falling thick on the parchment. "I cannot read or write," she urged, piteously. The secretary seized her hand, made her trace a cross, and her own name in large scrawling letters. Murmurs of anger rose from the English. "Traitor, thou hast betrayed us!" they cried indignantly to Cauchon. "You lie," returned that prelate, curtly, and truthfully. Nothing was farther from his intentions than that Jeanne should escape. In the tumult which followed he turned to the Cardinal Bishop of Winchester: "How shall we treat her?" he asked. "Admit her to penitence," promptly replied Cardinal Beaufort.

The Bishop then read another sentence, by which Jeanne was "finally and definitely" committed to perpetual prison, to "the bread of sadness and the water of affliction," that for the rest of her life she might have leisure to repent of her crimes. "Where shall she be taken," asked the usher, when all was over. "Take her whence she came," said the Bishop of Beauvais.

It was evident, then, that deliverance was not yet. But, as they led her back to her

plank-bed in the dreadful prison she could realize only two things: that her Voices must have deceived her, and that she had denied her mission. And yet in her soul she knew it was true, that supernatural life she had lived for seven years. And she had denied it, . . . because she feared the fire! . . . She was overwhelmed by her own stupid ingratitude! And perhaps, if she had trusted her Voices a little longer they would really have delivered her . . . even at the stake. Yes! perhaps she had saved her life . . . but what about her soul?

And then a horror of great darkness that could be felt, seized upon her and dragged her down, in that secret and terrible place to which the Saints find their way, to share mystically the Passion of Christ; along a path trodden hard and stained by the bleeding feet of the King of Martyrs, and those who have courage to follow Him whithersoever He goeth. . . .

But outside, in the Castle courtyard, in the glorious spring morning, Warwick, perplexed and annoyed, stood talking angrily

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to Cauchon. "This girl will escape us yet," he said indignantly. "Be easy, we shall soon have her again!" said the Bishop of Beauvais, laughing.

III

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CAUCHON was not mistaken. The sentence was passed on Thursday, May 24th, the anniversary of her capture. On that afternoon the Vice-Inquisitor visited Jeanne, and directed her to put on a woman's dress, which was left with her; and to allow her hair, which was short, and hung round her neck like a man's, to be cut close. She seemed stupefied, and promised to obey.

Three days later, on Trinity Sunday, a report began to spread that Jeanne had again put on the man's clothes she had worn. A number of Burgundian officials proceeded to the Castle to inquire into this. ¹“While we were waiting for the prison guard,” says one of them, “several of the English, who were in the courtyard of the Castle, spoke threatening words, as Maître Nicholas Midi told me, to the effect that he who would throw both

¹ P. 177.

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of us into the water would be well employed. And, hearing these words, we returned . . . much frightened, and went away without speaking to Jeanne."

When Cauchon and eight others came to her cell next morning, the prisoner appeared before them dressed as a man.

Several reasons have been alleged for this act of Jeanne's. Father Martin Ladvenu, a Dominican, says:¹ "The Maid revealed to me that, after her abjuration and recantation, she was violently treated in the prison, molested, beaten, and ill-used; and . . . that on this account she had resumed a man's dress." Jeanne herself told Cauchon that she took the dress again because he had failed to keep his promise to her.² But it is certain that whatever were the reasons, she was forced into the act. The man's clothes which she took off were put into a bag and left in her cell. On Sunday, when she asked to be allowed to rise, before unlocking her chains her cowardly guards took away the

¹ P. 163.

² That she should be set at liberty and admitted to the Sacraments.

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garments she should have put on, and emptied upon the bed the bag of man's clothes to wear which meant death. Jeanne knew this, and so did they. But the English had determined that Jeanne should never escape them. She is said to have asked for the others in vain. Cauchon, secretly delighted that things had turned out exactly as he had planned, nevertheless questioned Jeanne severely as to why she had done this. She told him twice she would rather die than be in chains, and suffer the anguish of such an imprisonment, adding piteously: "If you will let me go to Mass, and put me in a fair prison, and let a woman be with me, I will be good!" "Have your Saints spoken to you since Thursday?" was the Bishop's retort. "Yes," she answered: "God has warned me by St. Catherine and St. Margaret what a grievous thing I have done by consenting to treason, and making that abjuration to save my life."

This answer was the direct cause of her death. In the margin of the *Procès-verbal* is written: "*Responsio mortifera*"—an answer worthy of death. Then she said plainly:

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“ If I said that God had not sent me I should deserve damnation. God did send me. What I said and revoked last Thursday I said and revoked through fear of the fire.” (*Timens ignem.*) She added, in answer to a further question, that she did not understand and had never understood what was in the form of abjuration she had signed through terror, and that she revoked nothing. “ I will take a woman’s dress, if it please you,” she ended, “ but nothing else ! ”

The fearless spirit had committed itself far enough. She had “ relapsed,” and nothing could save her now. Cauchon went out from her presence elated and triumphant. Meeting Warwick and some of the English lords in the courtyard he saluted them gaily. “ Farewell, farewell,” he cried, “ all is well ! We have caught her at last ! ”

No time was lost in preliminaries. Next day, Tuesday, Cauchon met forty-two assessors in the Archbishop’s chapel, and briefly stated that, Jeanne having relapsed, she had now nothing more to hope for in this world. She had refused, he said, to submit to the Church: the Church now cast her off, and

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delivered her over to the secular arm; praying human justice to treat the prisoner gently . . . that is to say, without mutilation and shedding of blood. In this view of her case the forty-two concurred. Jeanne, who was not present, and who was in entire ignorance of what was taking place, was summoned to appear next morning at eight o'clock, in the old Market-place of Rouen, to hear herself declared relapsed, a heretic, and excommunicate, and to be handed over to the civil authorities. But it was not until next day at an hour's notice that Jeanne knew she was to die.

Early in the morning two good Dominican friars came to her cell by Cauchon's orders to warn her to prepare for immediate death. One of them says: ¹ "The day when Jeanne was delivered up to be burned, I was in the prison during the morning with Brother Martin Ladvenu, whom the Bishop of Beauvais had sent to her to announce her approaching death, and to induce in her true contrition and penitence, and also to hear her in confession. This the said Ladvenu

¹ P. 158.

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did most carefully and charitably; and when he announced to the poor woman the death she must die that day . . . and she heard of the hard and cruel death which was approaching, she began, in a sad and pitiful manner, as one distraught . . . to cry out: 'Alas! am I to be so horribly and cruelly treated? Alas! that my body . . . should to-day be consumed and burned to ashes! Ah! I would far rather have my head cut off, seven times over, than be thus burned: . . . I appeal to God, the Great Judge, for the great evils and injustice done to me!'

"After these complaints the . . . Bishop arrived, to whom she at once said: 'Bishop, I die through you.' And he began to explain to her, saying: 'Ah! Jeanne, have patience; you die because you have not kept to what you promised us, and for having returned to your first evil-doing.' And the poor Maid answered him: 'Alas, if you had put me in the prisons of the Church Courts, and given me into the hands of competent and suitable ecclesiastical guardians, this would not have happened: for this I summon you before God.'"

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After his departure Jeanne besought her confessor to give her Holy Communion. He dared not do so on his own responsibility, but sent to Cauchon, who presently returned answer that Jeanne might have Holy Communion "and anything else she liked." (This, although he had already condemned her as a "relapsed heretic.") The Blessed Sacrament was brought by a priest from a neighbouring church without lights or ceremony. Brother Martin, indignant, requested that It should be taken back and brought with due reverence, which was done. ¹ "I saw the Body of Christ carried to the said Jeanne," says a witness, "with much solemnity, and the singing of Litanies and intercession '*Orate pro eâ*,' and with a great multitude of candles." ² "I administered to her the Body of Christ," says Brother Martin, "she received It with great devotion and tears which I cannot describe."

Then, it being past eight o'clock, Jeanne was led out to die. It was Wednesday, May 30th, 1431, the Eve of Corpus Christi.

³ "I saw her," says one sympathetic wit-

¹ P. 291.

² P. 193.

³ P. 201.

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ness, "coming out of the castle, weeping much, and led to the place of execution by a troop of soldiers, to the number of 120, some with swords and some with clubs. Touched with compassion at this sight, I could go no further." ¹ "I saw Jeanne led to the scaffold," says Manchon, "and there were . . . soldiers around her bearing swords and staves, so that no one was so bold as to speak to her save Brother Martin Ladvenu, and Maître Jean Massieu."

One more there was, however, of whom we are told by the two other notaries. He who had betrayed her realized too late what he had done. As the piteous procession passed by, Loyseleur ² "was seized with compunction and climbed into the cart, earnestly desiring her pardon; at which many of the English were indignant; and, had it not been for the Earl of Warwick, Loyseleur would have been killed; the said Earl enjoined him to leave Rouen as soon as he possibly could, if he wished to save his life." Another priest tells us that Loyseleur, as he left Jeanne, was "in tears."

¹ P. 170.

² P. 299.

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In the Old Market Place three platforms had been erected. On one sat Cardinal Beaufort, with the Bishops of Norwich, Beauvais, Noyon, and Th  rouanne; on the second, the civil officers, to whom Jeanne was to be delivered. On the third was Nicholas Midi,¹ the appointed preacher, and beside him presently stood the prisoner, in a long white garment reaching to her feet, a mitre on her head, with the inscription: "Heretic, Relapsed, Apostate, Idolater." As she mounted the steps leading to the platform she cried: "Rouen, Rouen, is it here I must die?" Then, as she stood beside the grim figure of Nicholas Midi, in full view of the ten thousand who had come to see her burn, she looked out over that sea of heads, and saw the stake. . . . Even yet, perhaps, "Messire St. Michel" would deliver her by a miracle at the last—at the very last! At any rate she would not fail again, as she had failed last week. . . . She would trust God absolutely, this time. . . . After all, He knew. . . .

The great Doctor beside her was giving

¹ He died three days later, of leprosy.

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out his text: "If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it." His words poured out in a torrent of eloquence, but she scarcely heard him. She was looking across curiously at the stake . . . even yet she could not quite understand that it was for her! . . . All sorts of distracting thoughts flashed through her mind—the remembrance of the old ring that her father and mother had given her, engraved with "*Ihesus-Maria*"; which Cauchon had taken from her . . . her father was dead now, some one had told her . . . dead of a broken heart. . . . She could not feel sorry about him . . . she could not feel anything! Every faculty of mind and body was tense and strained in an agony of expectation. . . . Surely, if she trusted him so perfectly, St. Michael would not fail! . . .

Again she stared at the stake. It was raised high, on a platform of masonry heaped high with brushwood and tarry faggots.

Every one could see her, up there. . . . She wondered, with a kind of detached curiosity, what she would feel. Well! she would soon know! . . . She was only nine-

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teen, and young, and strong . . . she did not want to die. . . . What was that inscription written up in large letters over the stake, she wondered again? And how long would Maître Nicholas go on preaching? She supposed after that they would take her away and . . . What was that? . . . The preacher was speaking to her: "*Jeanne, the Church casts you off; She can defend you no longer; go in peace!*"

To the stake, she supposed, as a hoarse roar rose from the crowd, and another voice—Cauchon's this time—began to read out a sentence. . . . What terrible words! . . .
"*A homicidal viper . . . the poisoned virus of heresy . . . this pernicious leprosy . . . for these causes . . . we decree that thou art a relapsed heretic . . . we denounce thee as a rotten member . . . cast out from the Unity of the Church . . . abandoned to the secular power.*"

There was a moment's pause. She understood now that she was to die! She fell on her knees in her agony and prayed aloud
"most notably and devoutly, in such man-

¹ P. 144.

² P. 170.

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ner that the judges, prelates, and all present were provoked to much weeping, seeing her make these pitiful regrets and sad complaints. Never did I weep more for anything that happened to me," says Manchon. The Bishop of Noyon, who was present officially, tells us: ¹ "she began to make many pious . . . lamentations, and among other things she said that nothing she had done, either good or ill, had been suggested by the King. Thereupon," adds the Bishop, "I left, not wishing to see the burning of Jeanne. I saw many of the bystanders weeping." ² "I was present," says another dignitary, "at the final preaching, but not at the execution, for very pity of the deed. Many of those present wept."

It is interesting to know from another witness that Cauchon was amongst this number.

Jeanne was still praying passionately: "Most Holy Trinity," she cried, "have mercy upon me! I believe in You. Jesus, mercy! Mary, help! St. Michael, St. Gabriel, St. Catherine, St. Margaret, help me! Holy Mother of God! Blessed Saints in Paradise,

¹ P. 256.

² P. 208.

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help me!" . . . She ¹"besought mercy also, most humbly, from all manner of people of whatever condition or estate they might be, . . . begging them to pray for her, forgiving them the harm they had done her . . . up to the very end."

Her prayers ended, she was taken to the second platform, on which sat the Bailly of Rouen, and the secular judges; but so great was the confusion that though it was their legal duty to pass sentence of death upon her, it was not done. ²"I saw and clearly perceived, because I was there all the time," says Friar Ysambard, ". . . that the secular Judge did not condemn her, either to death or to burning; and although the lay and secular Judge had appeared and was present . . . she was entirely without judgement or conclusion of the said Judge, delivered into the hands of the executioner, and burnt—it being said to the executioner, simply, and without other sentence: 'Do thy duty.'"

³"When she was given over by the Church," says faithful Massieu, "I was still with her; and with great devotion she

¹ P. 175.

² P. 161.

³ P. 175.

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asked to have a Cross: and, hearing this, an Englishman, who was there present, made a little cross of wood with the ends of a stick, which he gave her, and devoutly she received and kissed it, making piteous lamentations and acknowledgements to God, our Redeemer, Who had suffered on the Cross for our Redemption . . . and she put the said Cross in her bosom. . . . And besides, she asked me humbly that I would get for her the Church Cross, so that she might see it continually until death . . . the which being brought, she embraced closely and long, and kept it till she was fastened to the stake . . . I was much hurried by the English . . . who wished me to leave her in their hands, that she might be put to death the sooner, saying to me, when I was trying to console her on the scaffold: 'What, Priest! will you have us dine here?''

She was led, a shrinking, piteous figure, in the white robe and hideous headdress, through the parted crowd to the foot of her Calvary. She could not read the title which the weeping Cauchon had caused to be written above the stake.

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“Jeanne, called the Maid, Liar, Pernicious, Abuser of the People, Diviner, Superstitious, Blasphemer of God, Presumptuous, Faithless Miscreant, Boaster, Idolater, Cruel, Dissolute, Invoker of Devils, Apostate, Schismatic, Heretic.”

As they bound her to the rough wood she did not cease to call upon St. Michael . . . Even now, there was time . . . The chains were bound tightly—so tightly that they hurt—but she was used to pain, and to chains. Would St. Michael never come? Even Massieu, that compassionate friend, had left her—she was alone up there, between earth and sky, helpless. No! there was still some one—the Dominican friar in his white habit who had confessed her that morning—ages ago. But he would be burnt too . . . the executioner was lighting the pile from below, stifling, suffocating clouds of pungent smoke rolled up . . . ¹ “As I was near her at the end,” the brave Dominican tells us: “the poor woman besought and humbly begged me . . . to bring her the Cross, to hold it upright on high before her

¹ P. 161.

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eyes until the moment of death, so that the Cross on which God was hanging might be in life continually before her eyes.”¹ “When I was holding the Cross before her she begged me to descend, as the fire was mounting.”

² “The greater number of those present, to the number of ten thousand, wept and lamented, saying that she was of great piety.”

³ “A certain Englishman, a soldier, who hated her greatly, had sworn to bring a faggot for the stake. When he did so, and heard Jeanne calling on the name of Jesus in her last moments, he was stupefied . . . In the afternoon . . . he confessed . . . to a Brother of the Order of St. Dominic, that he had gravely erred, and that he had repented . . . In the afternoon of the same day, the executioner came to the Convent of the Dominicans, saying . . . that he feared he was damned because he had burnt a saint,”
“quite desperate, and fearing never to obtain pardon and indulgence from God for what he had done to this holy woman.”⁴ “Being

¹ P. 189.

² P. 199.

³ P. 191.

⁴ P. 161.

⁵ P. 161.

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in the flames, she ceased not to call in a loud voice the Holy Name of Jesus, imploring and invoking without ceasing the aid of the Saints in Paradise; again, what is more, in giving up the ghost and bending her head, she uttered the Name of Jesus as a sign that she was fervent in the Faith of God, just as we read of St. Ignatius, and many other martyrs." When the flames first reached her she cried for Holy Water. Then, her streaming, smoke-blinded eyes fixed upon the Divine Pity of the great Crucifix, the fire gaining upon her, ten thousand, stricken to awed silence, heard a piercing cry of joy peal out of that fearful cloud of smoke and crackling flame: "St. Michael! St. Michael! Oh! my Voices have not deceived me!" And then, as Heaven opened, and agony failed and faded into rapture at the Feet of the Beatific Vision, there was a sobbing murmur: "Jesus . . . Jesus . . . Jesus."

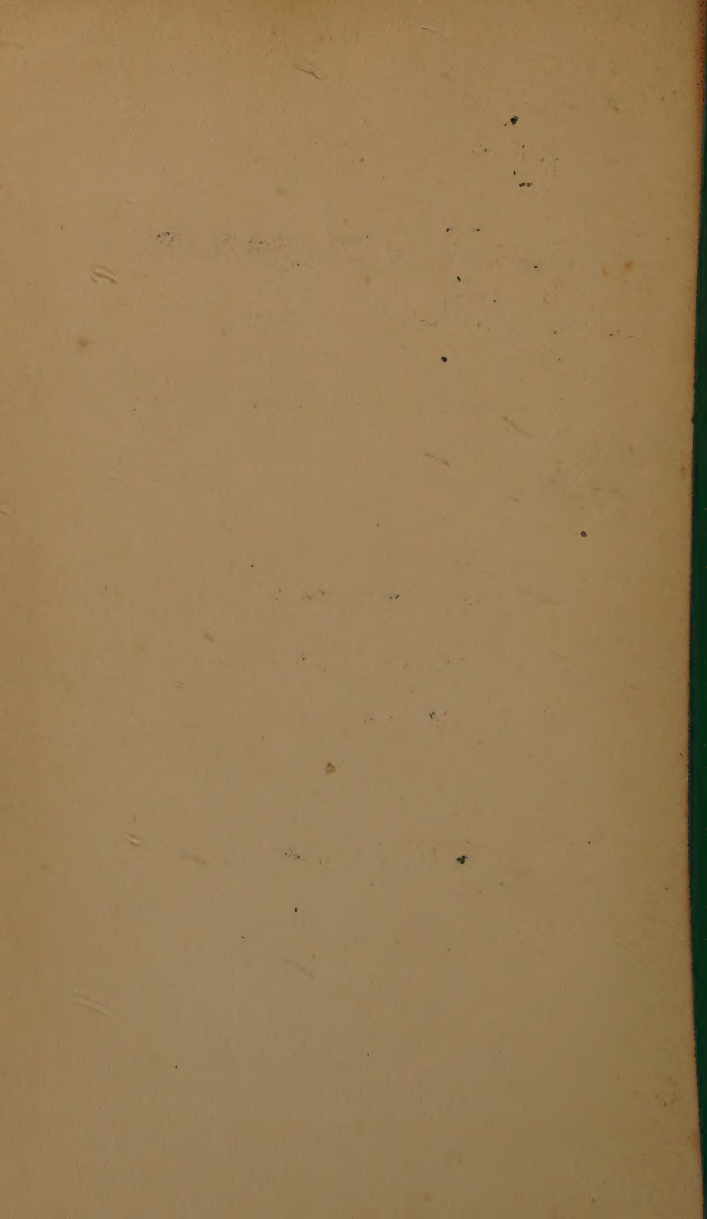
"We are all lost, we have burnt a Saint!" cried the people, terror-stricken. But an aged Canon of Rouen turned away, "weeping greatly."

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“God grant,” said he, “that my soul may rest in the place where I believe this woman’s to be.”

THE END

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